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HIS LIFE AND MINISTRY

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THE SON OF MAN:
HIS LIFE AND MINISTRY.

BY G. S. DREW, M.A.,

AUTHOR OF "REASONS OF FAITH," "SCRIPTURE LANDS IN CONNECTION
WITH THEIR HISTORY," ETC.

"THE LIFE WAS THE LIGHT OF MEN."

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PREFACE.

THIS book contains an attempt to describe our Lord's common life, and show its relation to that part of His career which may be distinguished as public and official. In speaking of His common life we especially refer to that which He lived during the years of His seclusion at Nazareth, and which naturally passed into His daily habits during the time when He was exercising His public ministry, and especially in the intervals between its chief occasions.

The writer has already, in a former work, delineated the earlier, which is by far the larger, portion of this part of His career. In doing this, he was conscious of unfeigned diffidence when he remembered how invariably commen-

tators on the Gospel History speak of this portion of our Lord's earthly existence as 'marked by absolute obscurity,' and as having been 'studiously withdrawn' from human knowledge. But, as he said in the Preface to his former work, 'Long-continued thought upon the subject emboldens him to ask, Is this often repeated and generally accepted dictum indeed well founded? Why should the reserve of the Evangelists be regarded as tantamount to the prohibition of inquiry in this instance, when it is not so regarded with respect to many occasions in the later period of Christ's ministry, where interpreters do not hesitate to fill up and illuminate, from extraneous sources, that which has been only briefly set forth in the inspired Record? Facts which illustrate the period in question are within our reach, and we have not been forbidden to ascertain and examine them.

'Now this being the case, ought not those facts to receive due consideration, and indeed is not attention to them necessary, in order to complete our view of Christ's fulfilment of the mission for which He came into the world? He

came to live a life which should be the "Light of Men." In other words, the design of His Incarnation was to embody, and by embodying to reflect, and so openly reveal, the Divine form and order of man's existence. Surely, this is the true view and statement of the purpose of the Eternal Word, and not that which speaks of "plans" formed by Him at the outset of His course, and of far-sighted methods which He then devised for their after-execution. The object of His earthly ministry was the fulfilment—not of any freshly-formed schemes, but—of the eternal purpose and design of God, that fulfilment being carried forward amidst the circumstances, the duties and relationships, of an ordinary life. And this being so, is not the distinct recognition of that larger portion of His course, wherein we see the greater part of the majority of human lives reflected, absolutely necessary? One can hardly imagine any other than a simply assenting answer to this question. But such an assent supplies an ample justification of the apparently presumptuous attempt on which the writer has ventured in these pages.

‘ Their simple purpose is to remove, with fitting care and reverence, that veil of reserve which has been so wisely drawn over this, as over many later portions (*where a similar removal is attempted by every commentator on the Gospel History*), so that, as nearly as possible, we too may see our Lord as He was actually seen by those who ‘*companied with Him*’ in the earlier days of His mortality. *He was not hidden from them, during that period, in any mysterious retirement. And why then is it necessary that He should be so hidden from ourselves ?*’

This question deserves to be well pondered. Under the influence of the considerations which it suggests, the writer attempted to set forth in outline our Lord’s Life throughout those thirty years, such as we know it must have been when we bear in mind the design of His Incarnation, the scene in which it was witnessed, and the results of the earlier, which may be discerned in the later, stages of His work amongst mankind. In carrying out his purpose he made careful use of the chief authorities which have informed us respecting the

period under consideration, as well as of his own recollections of Nazareth and its neighbourhood, where the work which he thus attempted to execute was meditated many years ago, while he was passing amidst the scenes he has described.

The results which were thus brought forward, having been enlarged and carefully revised, are presented in the first part of this volume. Here, too, the view of what we have called our Lord's 'common' life has been continued through the three years of His ministry under the conviction that there was no break in the continuity of its development, but that the daily habits by which He had already been distinguished in the home of His seclusion, distinguished Him afterwards in Capernaum and Jerusalem, although He was then dwelling in the midst of other circumstances, and working in another sphere. His kinsfolk and acquaintance would surely observe that just what He was then He had always been, that He observed all His old usages in those friendly households which He then frequented. Every one, indeed,

must feel that in thus depicting His Humanity in the common scenes of its manifestation, great caution should be observed lest any of the truths respecting His Person which are set forth in the Church's creeds should be obscured.¹ Such caution the writer has to the utmost of his power observed, and he believes that the effect of his researches will be to strengthen men's hold of Catholic Truth as well as to illuminate the familiar pages of the Evangelists. They will enable us to approach Christ in the scenes of His ministry with a deeper and more vivid sense of His Personality. His relations too with men will be widened in our view, and we shall perceive fresh aspects of His character, and a fuller significance both in the language of His teaching and in its illustrations. Moreover His Divine as well as His Human nature will come before us more impressively. And we shall find our reverence deepened while we understand Him better and grow more familiar with His Person and His demeanour.

¹ See Note, p. 257.

And besides these results from the contemplations which the writer has presented, certain lessons are supplied by them that appear to have a special adaptation to the age. Events which are now happening, 'have opened out and ascertained,' if we may here use Butler's words in another adaptation of them, 'the meaning' of this heretofore 'strangely-neglected view of the Redeemer's history. We shall see that from that 'unhasting yet ever unresting' Life, come the very admonitions which our time and people need, and which will calm, while they rebuke, the turmoil and excitement by which the present generation is painfully distinguished. Those admonitions come to us, solemnly, and yet gently and benignantlly, condemning the selfishness which is fearfully weakening our family social and national relations, as well as that absorption in present interests which is hiding from men the Supernatural Order in which this sphere of their existence is incorporated, while it also separates them from past ages, and unfits and indisposes them to look onwards with far-reaching interest into the future.

We surely need these admonitions. And then from the same source how many needed words of consolation may be drawn ! How triumphantly may those martyr toilers and sufferers, who are patiently abiding in so many hidden places throughout the land waiting for Israel's consolation, who are 'refraining their spirits and keeping them low' amidst their labours and their self-denials—look towards that humble scene where Christ's life was going forward in the very image of their own. Day after day did He work and suffer in Nazareth and Capernaum and in Jerusalem, amidst weary loneliness and aching lack of sympathy, just as they work and suffer now who are fulfilling their sad and heavy ministries uncheered and unrequited. Joy and triumph surely to all these sons, and daughters of affliction when they remember Whose course is reflected in their own ! For just like themselves did He live on through weary, saddened dreariness, especially in the home and workshop of the carpenter, and amidst the dull, ungenial companionship of those long years of His seclusion.

Most thankfully even in the gloomiest passages of their lives may innumerable sufferers be comforted by the remembrance not only of His likeness to themselves, but of the sympathy which it betokens, as they reflect—*‘By His experience through those years He can feel with us as well as for us, in these sad days of ours, amidst these apparently frustrated efforts and fruitless toil, and while this unheeding testimony is being borne. In that weary season, He suffered what we are suffering now. And on the ground of this common feeling and experience we can plead before Him with a confidence which otherwise we could not have felt for His grace to help in this our time of need.’*

LONDON, November, 1874.

ERRATUM.

P. 165, note, for ‘courage,’ or ‘manly virtue,’ read ‘virtue,’ or ‘manly courage.’

CONTENTS.



Part I.

INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
INFANCY AND EARLY CHILDHOOD	19

CHAPTER II.

FAMILY AND HOME LIFE	36
--------------------------------	----

CHAPTER III.

LIFE IN THE COMMUNITY	53
---------------------------------	----

CHAPTER IV.

LIFE IN THE NATION	72
------------------------------	----

CHAPTER V.

CHURCH LIFE	89
-----------------------	----

<i>Appendix to Chapter V.</i>	107
---	-----

Part II.

PUBLIC MINISTRY.

CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
BAPTISM AND TEMPTATION	108

CHAPTER II.

PROPHETIC MINISTRY	134
------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER III.

THE MINISTRY OF CONFLICT	168
------------------------------------	-----

Part III.

THE DEATH, RESURRECTION, AND ASCENSION.

CHAPTER I.

THE DEATH	200
---------------------	-----

CHAPTER II.

THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION	223
--	-----

THE APOSTOLIC MINISTRY, p. 239.

NOTE	257
----------------	-----

‘ The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth.’

‘ The Life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal Life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us.’—ST. JOHN.

‘ Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself took part of the same. . . . In all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren ! ’—EPISTLE TO HEBREWS.

INTRODUCTION.

LIVES of Christ are, for the most part, little more than paraphrases of the four Gospels, accompanied by a commentary on the occurrences which are therein related. Confining their attention to the details given by the Evangelists, the writers of these Lives first endeavour to determine the chronological order of those details, and then each one dwells with a fulness proportioned to his knowledge and faculties of meditative insight, upon their meaning and intention. In this manner many have striven to bring out the chief features of that Divine Image Which is habitually present to every Christian mind, and on Which all thoughtful men look with heedfulness and reverence.

And as a result from the work which has thus been carried forward, this Image is ever appearing in more impressive aspects, and under relations which are more and more far-reaching and momentous. We know Christ better, and we understand more truly the work which He accomplished. This must be thankfully acknowledged, while yet it is evident that the entire

proportions of our Master's Life, and its complete and full significance, can only be imperfectly disclosed by these customary methods of portraying it, and that an additional effort is necessary if we would see His character in its perfection, and discern all that may be learned from His relations with the circumstances in the midst of which He wrought and suffered. For, in the first place, it is comparatively only a small portion of His earthly course which has been explicitly brought forward by the Evangelists. They hardly take any notice of what He did and said, during those earlier years when the character and habits are formed, and the bent of the will and affections is manifested. Then, again, they make very slight allusions to what may be called His routine existence, continuous with those early years, while His public ministry was being exercised. The ordinary, as distinguished from the official, life which lay between and behind His public discourses and His mighty works, is almost unnoticed by the inspired writers. And yet that obscure period before His ministry began, and those large portions of time which lay behind its more prominent occasions, must surely be in view if His earthly course is to be seen in its completeness. The habits and proceedings which were witnessed by the men who grew up with Him in Nazareth, and by his fellow-townsmen in Capernaum, as well as by His daily intimates in Jerusalem and Bethany, should also be per-

ceived, if we would behold His true character, and be perfectly faithful to the impressions which it was intended to convey.

For such ends those hidden periods should be illuminated, and whatever is contained in them should be actually witnessed. The course which He pursued throughout those days and years formed part of the Life which is declared to be the Light of Men. Then, too, in the Person of Jesus of Nazareth, we must recognize the Eternal Word through Whom the mind and will of God have been communicated to His creatures. During all that time His Revealing Work was going forward; and surely from that part of it, also, instruction may be gathered. Indeed, we should reverse conclusions that have ever been accepted by the Church, and negative the first principles of Catholic belief, if we should question that His words and His conduct, His abstinences and His activities, were as significant then as they were afterwards. Nor can we doubt that the meaning which was conveyed by them, as far as it can be ascertained, was intended for man's use, and for the promotion of his welfare and advancement.

It is true, indeed, that very little has been written respecting that part of Christ's human course to which we are referring. Nay, it may even be admitted that, in some measure, those years were intentionally veiled, and that, for this end, a special influence was exerted upon

the minds of the Evangelists. We can hardly doubt that had they been left to themselves, they would have dilated, after the manner of ordinary biographers, on Our Lord's childhood and youth, and on the common occurrences of His life before and after His public ministry began. That they have not done this, shows that they were wrought upon by an Agency, the nature of which every Christian reader will devoutly recognize—to fence off from the observation of hasty and superficial gazers these portions of His course as Man amongst mankind. And yet while fully admitting the fact that, from this cause, little has been said about the periods in question, we need not by any means consider this reserve as equivalent to an admonition that we should abstain from all inquiry and thought respecting them as they may be traced and followed from their beginning in Nazareth. The silence of the Evangelists is, indeed, remarkable, and it is well fitted to deter the inquiries of men who would not have profited by what they looked upon, if this part of the Divine pathway upon earth had been made fully known. And yet the veil which they have cast over this period is not impenetrable, or of such a nature that earnest and devout inquirers need be hindered from an attempt to ascertain what lies behind it. On the contrary, this part of the Gospel History invites the attention of those who are accustomed to 'ponder in their hearts;' who, in other words, weigh

lovingly and trustfully, as well as thoughtfully, every Divine communication. All who look in such a spirit towards Nazareth, and then to Capernaum and Jerusalem and Bethany, and to their surroundings, and who have duly qualified themselves to weigh the import of the few but most significant words that have been written respecting the Life which was therein passed, who consider the subject under all the lights which converge upon those places—will find it marvellously illumined. The Existence which was witnessed by men living there, will come forth with a clearness and definiteness which, until they thus apply themselves to look on it, could not have even been imagined.

This is the effect if the periods of which we are speaking are surveyed in the spirit, and from the point of view, as well as with the helps, which have just been indicated. Then the results will follow which have rewarded diligent inquiry, and devout and steadfast meditation, in so many similar instances. The direction in which such meditation and inquiry should be exercised, and our principal sources of information on the subject, may here be suitably indicated in a few pages.—With this view must first be named a heedful regard to the chief purposes of the Incarnation.

I. These purposes may be securely learned by a careful observation of the scope of the Divine communications,

as well as by an investigation of their substance. When these are ascertained, they will cast invaluable light upon the entire Gospel History, and indeed upon all the supernatural dispensations of God in His dealings with mankind. But there is no part of these dispensations which is more effectively illuminated by the means in question than the one to which we are now looking. What, then, were those purposes except to embody man's aboriginal nature, and in that nature to reveal afresh the Divine plan and order of his life? Humanity in its originally perfect reflection of God's image, was, as in a second Adam, to be manifested again in Christ. Moreover, in this perfect form He came to live through man's appointed course, and thereby make known every one of the laws by which it is controlled. In His individual life, in His purely personal relations towards God and all His creatures, and then in the discharge of every social obligation, He undertook to disclose afresh the rules of human existence, and reveal the manner in which man should fulfil his part in the Economy into which we have been brought. In other words, He came to show, both in His person and His work, what God had constituted man to be, and what amidst all his duties and relationships He meant him to become. And this was to be done so perfectly, that every one who thoughtfully looks on Jesus of Nazareth might intelligently answer the inquiries, Who art thou, and Why art thou here, and

Whither is the current of thy existence taking thee?

Now what the true form of human life is, and what are the order and laws which should be observed in it, may be learned from the injunctions of Holy Scripture, and from the acts and aspirations, nay, even from the failures, of the men whose proceedings have been there recorded. In the inspired pages, and especially in Our Lord's personal and direct teaching—completed by that of His Apostles—we may see with hardly any possibility of misapprehension, the perfect ideal of a human course; and any error or defect in our conception of it may be corrected by the fuller details of His after-life, which again are illustrated by the precepts and instructions which we find in the Epistles. From such sources the ideal form of human being may be accurately learned; and we are sure that it was in that form that His existence passed, as He lived through childhood, and youth, and early manhood, in His home and neighbourhood, in the nation and in the church, as again afterwards in His larger sphere as Prophet and Champion of our race, after He had been called to His public ministry. When we bear this fact in view, we immediately ascertain the main distinctions of His conduct in the circumstances amidst which He moved, and also the character which He manifested as son and brother, as neighbour and friend and citizen, as Prophet, and Healer, and Redeemer. We

see what He was amidst the toils of life, in its sufferings and its enjoyments, while He lived on day by day, and year after year, through the periods to which our attention is directed. The characteristic features of His path during that large portion of His earthly course, the marked and prominent relationships into which He was brought by it, are in this manner unmistakably disclosed and ascertained.

II. Then, besides our general assurance that, at that time, His life was perfectly fashioned after the authentic pattern of existence, and this information as to the chief features that distinguished it—we also know, definitely and in detail, the outward conditions amidst which it was carried forward. We have been told in what framework, and under what terms, the ideal of man's existence was then embodied in His Person. The limits and direction of His life, its outward environment, in Nazareth and Capernaum, and in Jerusalem, have been clearly indicated. We are familiar with those places, and with many of the occurrences that were taking place in them. And this, in other words, is saying that we know, and can observe, the actual shape and costume in which the Divine pattern of man's life was manifested. Thus far the direct notices of the Evangelists respecting the hidden periods of our Lord's career—especially when those notices are connected with allusions indirectly made

to them—brief as they are, and fragmentary, may be regarded as furnishing clear and definite information.

Unmistakably they point out the localities in which He lived, the social position which He occupied, and the nature of the employments through which the purposes of His Incarnation were accomplished. We know the character of the towns and villages, and of the open country, through which He moved: the aspect of their surroundings is familiar. Their physical condition illustrated by the light of modern research, their historical associations, the nature of their government, their social advantages and drawbacks, nay, the dialect of their inhabitants, and the buildings which stood upon their surface, can be accurately ascertained. In some particulars, indeed, the scenes of this part of His earthly course may be obscure; but, in regard to the chief of them and those which reveal most plainly what we wish to learn, they are so translucently disclosed that we may clearly see and distinctly hear, and we may intelligently hold converse with, the things and persons amidst which, as a Galilean Jew, He lived and moved from the beginning of His course unto the end. What the manner of life in such homes as those in which He abode must of necessity have been, has been certified from innumerable sources of information. These send out rays which fully illuminate the ground towards which we are looking, and they mutually attest and interpret one another. So that,

carefully combining them and approaching whither their blended light has been sent forth, His living figure, robed in the costume which He actually wore, and surrounded by the circumstances amidst which He habitually moved—comes plainly into view. Those portions of His common life which have been so wisely hidden from careless discursive observation, are more and more clearly and vividly defined. They grow in living reality while we gaze on them, till, in many respects, we can see Him amidst them even more distinctly than we behold Him as He came forth on the well-known occasions of His public ministry in the towns of Galilee and in Jerusalem.

III. In realizing by these means His course throughout these periods, dwelling with Him in the house, observing His daily occupations, and His intercourse with His ‘kinsfolk and acquaintance,’ we obtain effective help, which is directly available in carrying out the purposes we are here contemplating. And this help is increased, our inferences are corrected, and they are also enlarged, by attending to the fuller details respecting the later portion of His Life, under the conviction that when it passed into its wider spheres, there was no break in the continuity of its development. Now this surely cannot be questioned. His course, His habits and proceedings, while He fulfilled His public ministry, were the consistent extension and issue of His life in

His earlier years. His path through Nazareth passed continuously into the more public manifestations of His earthly being, and it was therewith harmoniously blended. This fact is necessarily implied in that symmetrical unity which must be ascribed to His habits and proceedings. Every one who has looked under the light of this conviction into the glimpses that are given of that daily existence in Capernaum and Jerusalem which was interposed between the marked occasions of His ministry, will see reflected in His habits and demeanour there, the life which He had already lived, in another sphere and under other circumstances, in the home of His seclusion. The distinctions which then marked Him were afterwards unchanged; and all those precepts which He delivered in His later years had been already practically observed and kept by Him in the years which they succeeded. In fact they may be taken as historically descriptive of what He always was, and of what He habitually did. When this continuity is borne in mind, and when, in the light of it, we read the more detailed pages of His history, we find they cast an enlarging and also a correcting light on the obscurer stage of His existence and on the scenes and associations in the midst of which it passed, as these again send light in advance on the course behind and between the public occasions of His ministry. We have here a source of information that

should be used with special heedfulness in such an inquiry as that which we are meditating.

When it is connected with the others which have been pointed out, and when every fragment of information supplied from these sources is ‘compared and carefully pursued,’ the obscurest hints which they furnish having been ‘diligently traced’—we obtain those definite conclusions by means of which the whole of Christ’s common life comes into view: the basis upon which His public labours rested is distinctly ascertained. The darkness which rested on the thirty years of His course in Nazareth, and on the far larger portion of the three years which followed it, is entirely dispersed. All the notices which the Evangelists have given of His earthly ministry then fall into their true place and order, even though we may not be able to harmonize the events which are therein detailed in exact chronological sequence and connexion. His entire life on earth is seen to be evolved in complete harmonious development, as it gradually arose out of those past generations whose attainments He inherited, and whose vitality was energetically manifested in His person and associations.

His course being thus presented before our minds, complete in every part of it, we see that portion of His work which was publicly executed, rising naturally out of His ordinary existence, when He was called to dis-

charge the prophetic office. Unto this He was summoned when the Voice in the wilderness reached Him, and He went out with the multitude to be baptized. He had so fulfilled every obligation belonging to the human sphere of created being, that it was then said of Him, as of no other it could be said, 'In Him God was well pleased.' And being thus qualified, He was called to loftier ministrations. The Spirit, descending on Him in His baptism, was 'given to Him without measure.' His human nature was thus prepared for the highest achievements to which He had been designated. And the perfectness of the character into which He had grown, and His fitness for His appointed work, were soon afterwards openly displayed in His Temptation. Its events furnished an 'heroic manifestation' of the faithfulness and loyalty which He had 'learned through the things which He suffered' in the years of His seclusion, and it emphatically confirmed and illustrated the Voice from heaven which declared Him to be the Son of God. Then it was that the 'reasonable soul' of the man Jesus awoke to the full consciousness of the union of the Divine Nature with His humanity. He knew now that Deity empowered and inspired His manhood, and wrought through its instruments, and dwelt with Him in His Person. And under this conviction He henceforth fulfilled the work of His commission, which mainly consisted in bringing out His own Life, in contrast with

the errors and failures, and the transgressions, of the men who were before Him, and around Him. Now, and henceforth He was called to 'preach Himself,' to point to His own acts and habits, His spirit and His proceedings, as completing God's disclosure of what all men were made for and intended to become. And especially where their corrupt tendencies had misrepresented their position, and darkened their path, He was to declare Himself, with reference to those misapprehensions, as the Way, the Truth, and the Life, in and through Whom the real facts and laws of our existence might be witnessed.

When, with this view of its harmonious evolution and development, we survey the official which, so to speak, was superinduced on Christ's ordinary Life—we have a complete perception of His earthly course, and we see it in all its aspects as the Evangelists intended. Everything which met the eye and outward observation in His human history, then stands clearly in our view. But more than this must also be perceived, in order to perfect our conception of His Work and Character. That earthly life, which is thus seen in its entirety, must be surveyed against its historical background, and in connexion with its supernatural environment. As was just said, the intellect of the Man Jesus became fully conscious in His Baptism that the Divine was united with the human nature in the Person with which His associates were

familiar. That union, indeed, had existed from the hour of His Incarnation. In and through that event 'The Word was made flesh.' But as there has been no 'confusion' of the two 'substances,' and consequently no interference with His proper human development, neither is there any reason to suppose that the created intellect was conscious, or, shall we say, certain, of this mysterious indwelling until He heard the Voice, 'This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased.' Then He knew that the Person whom men looked upon was nothing less than the Shechinah, the Manifestation of God. And as man He henceforth lived and wrought in the strength of that belief. He knew, and henceforth He unmistakably declared, that, in perfect 'unity of Person,' without any 'confusion of substance,' He was One with that 'Life which had been from the beginning.'

Then, also, His nearest followers caught glimpses of this union; and after His departure, when they had been enlightened by the Pentecostal influences of The Spirit, it was fully recognized by them and made known. Hence, we find in all the Evangelists distinct references to the Pre-Incarnation ministry of The Word with Whom the manhood of Jesus was united, while St. John, with a deeper insight than the others, took up the language of the Hebrew Prophets, recognizing Him in the distant recesses of Eternity, 'before the mountains were brought forth or ever the earth and world were made,' and

acknowledged Him as Gcd. 'By Whom,' he says, 'all things in heaven and earth were made, so that without Him was not anything made that was made.' It was in his Image and Likeness as the 'first begotten of every creature,' and as the 'Head of all principalities and powers,' that the sons of God were created. He had been ordering their affairs in every place of their habitation through all past ages, as in the accomplishment of His Redeeming Work, He had been specially concerned with the affairs of men. On this account the ancient Scriptures everywhere testified of Him, 'of Whom Moses in the Law, and the Prophets did write,' as the Psalms also bear witness in every page to His presence and His agency.

Against this background of His Pre-Incarnation ministry, and under the light flowing out from it in every direction, all the facts of Christ's human Life, whether they are related fully, or are only implicitly contained in the Gospels, must be contemplated. Moreover, the significance of those which are later in the succession, when the Divine Glory which always inhabited His Person was fully manifested—should be thrown back on those which were of earlier occurrence, or which lay behind the public occasions of His ministry. Immense significance is thus obtained by them, and they will then be approached more reverently as well as with more heedfulness to the truths which they convey,

while yet their literal reality is in no degree affected. Still, in all their homeliness, and in the simplicity of many of their details, they will stand forth among the substantial and well-defined realities of human existence, though then seen under an illumination which compels our reverence, and communicates an authority to their disclosures from which there can be no appeal.

It is from this point of view, taking all these remembrances and associations into our account, and carefully using the methods which have been described—that an attempt is made in the following pages to delineate an outline of the Life of Christ from its beginning to its close on earth, and then, beyond this, as far as He is seen in the unveiling of that world wherein He now abides. In carrying out this purpose the ordinary forms and methods of biography are inapplicable. His existence flowed on in an undistinguished current, as was evidently suited to His purpose ; and, with one exception, it was unmarked by any striking epoch. Hence arise the difficulties of those who attempt to ‘harmonize’ the gospels, and from this cause, its several stages, as in an ordinary ‘Life and Memoirs’ cannot be indicated. Another, and, for the purpose of these pages, a far more effective method will be adopted in executing their design. Instead of dividing the entire Life into the successive periods of childhood and youth, of earlier

and later manhood, we shall endeavour to picture forth its several phases in the family and neighbourhood, in the nation and the church, and subsequently, after the occasion when He was brought into public life, in His discharge of the prophetic office and His period of conflict. This method will, in fact, evolve Christ's Life and Character in gradual chronological development. As their successive aspects—each one, so to speak, being laid upon the other—are brought forward, we shall advance in continuous order from the outset of His earthly existence, through its midway period to the end. Meanwhile, we shall be enabled to make use of the results that have been collected by the inquiries and meditations of writers who have employed the ordinary methods, and especially of those who have surveyed His work comprehensively, and who have disclosed a true insight into its profound significance.

If the endeavour thus entered on should be in any wise successful, it will help in that manifestation of Christ to the world, which He declared to be the condition of His 'drawing all men' unto Him. In His majesty and tenderness, in His perfect accord with surrounding things, and especially in His close fellowship with the weary and heavy laden—He will draw them unto Him. And He will give them overcoming strength and inspiration for the discharge of every duty, as well as rest and peace amidst their trials.

Part II.

INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

INFANCY AND EARLY CHILDHOOD.

WE begin, then, by endeavouring to obtain a distinct view of the material framework of the Divine Life, and of the social circumstances which surrounded it. With this purpose our attention must be directed to that upper province of Palestine which bordered on the Greco-Roman settlements that centered around Antioch, and which, for this reason, as well as on account of the commerce which its inhabitants carried forward with the Phœnicians settled on its coast, and also with Damascus and the farther East, was known as ‘Galilee of the Gentiles.’

In the North, where it passed into the Hellenic settlements, the country is picturesque and richly varied, and

its effect on the spectator is heightened by the ruins crowning the frequent summits which come into every prospect. There we are in* Upper Galilee; but, after passing southwards over twenty miles, or thereabouts, we reach the ground which is the object of our survey, and which, if less beautiful and romantic, is even more fertile than that which has been left in the upper province. Everywhere we are reminded of the ‘bread,’ the ‘dainties,’ the ‘fatness,’ of Asher, to whose tribe this part of Palestine belonged. It includes the maritime plains lying on the West; although, like the larger part of the covenanted heritage, they were never occupied by the tribe to which they were assigned in the division of the country. On the East, the Jordan and the valley through which it flows, also belongs to Lower Galilee. In this portion of its course the river is only an inconsiderable stream, and is fordable at every point except at its openings in the Lakes of Merom and Tiberias. This latter, lying deep amidst the bare hills which almost surround it on every side except the west—always formed a distinctly marked feature in this part of Palestine, although, strangely enough, it is barely alluded to in the earlier history of the country. The interest which attaches to the ‘Sea of Galilee’ is almost wholly derived from the mention of it in the New Testament.

The robust dwellers in this country, living close upon

Jezreel and Samaria, would necessarily take their full share in the political and warlike movements which the Old Testament has made familiar. In peaceful seasons they were near enough for commercial intercourse with the Phœnicians, whose chief settlement at Tyre was about thirty miles distant from the centre of the province. Interchanges of their produce for the wares and arms of those traders, would naturally go forward even in the centuries when the national spirit was mightiest. And, as it waned, the Gentile influences which wrought on the dwellers of Galilee, and especially upon those whose homes bordered on the maritime settlements, took full effect, so that every part of Northern Palestine became more and more deeply marked by the features of whatever nation was then paramount in its sway over the Jewish ground and people. Hence, at the time when the province emerges from the obscurity of its past history, and comes prominently into notice, a Greco-Roman aspect largely characterized its inhabitants, and was seen in their towns, their buildings, their social customs and domestic habits, nay, even in the language in which their intercourse was carried forward.¹

Among the communities farther south that influence

¹ The speech of a Galilean 'betrayed him,' not only by its provincial uncouthness, but by the frequent occurrence in it of Greek words, and turns of phraseology. These had been naturally introduced through the general prevalence of that language in his neighbourhood.

had been resisted. But, north of the Esdraelon plain, it was in complete ascendancy with all the tastes where-with it was associated. Over the whole surface of the country numerous signs of that 'exotic civilization,' which was introduced under the Seleucidæ, and which had been systematically extended by Herod and his successors, might be noticed. This Hellenizing tendency was seen, for example, when Philip changed the name of Banias into Cæsarea Philippi, and celebrated the rites of Greek and Roman worship in the temple which Herod had erected. Farther south, the Hebrew Bethsaida was replaced by the Latin Julias, and the city of Tiberias was erected over an ancient Jewish cemetery in the same neighbourhood. Close by, the names of Scythopolis, Pella, Hippos, and of the other cities of Decapolis, with the buildings, and especially the large theatres and gymnasia contained in them—indicated the same tendency. In fact, the whole country into which the traveller entered who came upwards from Southern Palestine, was becoming more and more foreign to the Jewish people in its aspect and associations.²

² 'Temples, theatres, gymnasia, some of them built on the largest scale, and in a style of the greatest magnificence, hemmed in the narrow home of Judaism. Nor, indeed, were even those restricted boundaries respected by the half pagan monarch. Even the Holy City itself was not exempted from these intrusions of heathenism, but was compelled to smother her resentment while a theatre, and

In the country which was thus framed and characterized, where nature is everywhere in animated, though nowhere in awful, guise, and which, indeed, is singularly marked by cheerful surroundings and stirring historical associations, we see where God was manifested in human flesh, where the Life which is the Light of men was developed and made known.

Our Lord's earliest years were spent in Nazareth, which an unbroken and unquestioned tradition identifies with the town which is still called by the same name. It stands in the last of those open mountain valleys that lie in the westernmost of the two ranges which are thrown off, in a southerly direction, from Mount Hermon. This Western range, just before breaking down abruptly into the Esdraelon plain, sinks into a green hollow closed in on all sides, upon which, centuries before the period when Nazareth is first mentioned, communities must have been established. It was, doubtless, in the possession of one of those Amorite or Highland races which the Israelites were commanded to exter-

still worse, an amphitheatre, profaned her precincts.'—Many tokens of these foreign influences are still extant, not far from Nazareth, in the eastern portion of the district in which it was included. The numerous changes in the occupation of the country, and the war devastations which have swept over it, have obliterated almost every trace of the buildings which existed during Christ's time in His immediate neighbourhood. But, even now, the ruins of two large theatres, adapted to 'the reception and entertainment of many thousand spectators,' may be seen just south of Tiberias, and about twenty miles from Nazareth.—Dr. Traill's '*Josephus*,' vol. i. p. xxxvi.

minate, when it was assigned to Zebulon in the tribal division of the country. Surrounded by gently-rising and well-cultivated hills, fertile and abundantly watered, enjoying a genial and bracing climate, and standing about a thousand feet above the level of the closely-adjacent sea,—the site of Nazareth enjoyed every one of the advantages which had been promised to the tribe in whose inheritance it was included. From its pasture-land Zebulon could offer his ‘sacrifices of righteousness;’ while, close by, he ‘sucked of the abundance of the seas, and of the treasures hid in the sand.’

On its western side, the town is not many miles distant from the Mediterranean, while, eastwards, a few hours’ journey would enable the foot-traveller to reach the towns bordering on the Lake of Capernaum, with which the inhabitants of Nazareth must have always been familiar. Over the roads which led northwards, across the Buttauf plain, Cana, and Sepphoris which was always in view from Nazareth, were quickly reached. And, in an opposite direction, through the narrow winding passes which led down to Esdraelon, the traveller was close to the scenes of Jewish history in the times of Barak and Deborah and Gideon, from whose conflicts the earlier inhabitants of Nazareth could not have stood aloof, any more than they could from the scenes which were witnessed in the reigns of Saul and David and Josiah.

Here, and afterwards in the neighbouring town of Capernaum, the home of Jesus was fixed during the thirty-three years in which He dwelt as a man amongst mankind. And when we remember that His purpose was not only to present human nature afresh in that aboriginal perfection wherein it perfectly reflected the Divine Image, but also to show how man's course in this world should be pursued—we cannot imagine any place, any more than we can think of any time, that was better fitted for carrying out the purposes of His appearing. In the exhaustion of all forms of human error, and the earnest aspirations of men for teaching from above—the 'fulness of the time' for the promised Incarnation, is immediately recognized. And when we think of the towns of Lower Galilee in comparison with all other possible localities in which the earthly life of Christ might have been manifested, the fitness of place is equally apparent. In lonelier scenes, in a wilderness seclusion such as that wherein the Baptist 'waxed strong in spirit' amidst the discipline prepared for him, the materials and instruments for accomplishing the Messiah's purpose were evidently wanting. He could not there have discharged the relationships and fulfilled the duties, which were involved in His commission. And, in more public localities, on the great highways of the world, in Cæsarea, nay even in Jerusalem, there were exceptional circumstances, arti-

ficial modes of life, that would have interfered with, and have spoiled, the completeness of the pattern. Nazareth and Capernaum standing, as we may say, near the centre of the age's movements, nay, even within view of them, and yet so placed as to be exempted from their undue influence and pressure, furnished scenes than which we can imagine none better fitted for the reception and entertainment of the Divine Redeemer, and for the supply of the instruments which He needed for discharging this momentous part of His benignant mission among men.

Upon the ineffably mysterious occurrence through which He took our humanity upon Himself, we stay not to remark, except with the observation that it was in seemly, and indeed needful, congruity with His character, and with the purposes that we have ascribed to Him. . We must feel that we are, indeed, among the harmonies of God, when, bearing that character and those purposes in our remembrance, we listen heedfully to the announcement—'The Holy Ghost shall come upon Thee, and the Power of the Highest shall overshadow Thee.' Just such an entrance into man's framework and circumstances, befitted the Redeemer's Nature, and perfectly subserved the ends of His deep humiliation.

And this sense of congruity, this satisfaction felt by every mind which dwells thoughtfully on the circum-

stances of the event, is greatly deepened when we observe the fitness for their part of those who were chosen as the agents in its accomplishment. Apart from their native qualifications, they were also marvellously wrought upon, so that their adaptation to the work assigned to them might be perfected. They may be certainly numbered among those who were resisting influences which they would have justly described as a contagion. In some instances, Hebrew fidelity was maintained among the upper classes, as the mention of certain 'chief Pharisees' in the neighbourhood bears witness. But in its strong opposition to the heathenizing influences which were felt through the whole province—it had its chief refuge, not among the 'lords, high captains, and chief estates' of Galilee, but rather among the humbler classes, the craftsmen in the towns, the peasantry of the numerous villages, the fishermen upon the lake. While their neighbours flocked to swell the crowds in Herod's theatres, these steadfast sons of Israel kept themselves apart, going up from time to time in small companies to the festivals of the Holy City. And moved in those pilgrimages by the historical and sacred associations of the scenes through which they had to pass, they would naturally confer together in strenuous protest, nay, often in rebellious discontent, upon the tokens which indicated, so ominously in their view, the fatalest apostasy. Nor can we doubt that,

amongst the worthiest examples of these 'faithful amongst the faithless found,' we may reckon Joseph and Mary, along with the families of which they were members.

In the midst of that widely-spread apostasy, they kept their 'consciences undefiled,' bravely upholding the trust and testimony which they knew had been Divinely committed to their charge. And we may fairly reckon ancestral influences amongst those through the power of which they, like their relatives, Zacharias and Elizabeth, 'were righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.'

They were both of the 'house and lineage of David;' and this distinction gave a certain honourable and high-minded firmness to their consistent support of their profession. Moreover, they were remarkable for their virtues and devoutness. In the few glimpses which have been given of Joseph we can clearly discern an upright, self-governed, large-hearted, generous man. Mary, his 'espoused wife,' we know more intimately, though, with what must be regarded as a seemly and most instructive reticence, she is on no occasion obtruded in the history, and indeed is seldom even mentioned. When, however, she is cleared from the illusions which fictitious legends, and weak poetic sentiment, have cast around the very few occasions on which she is brought

forward—we can recognize her distinctly enough for every useful purpose. An affectionately considerate woman; pondering things with heartfelt and not merely intellectual interest; her mind filled with devout thoughts and recollections, as her ready use of Scripture phraseology bears witness; meek, trustful, lovingly submissive to the Divine ordering of her affairs, yet strong, energetic and courageous in doing her part in their accomplishment—Mary stands before our view embodying the very ideal of one of the daughters and mothers of Israel. She was a worthy countrywoman of Miriam and Deborah and Hannah, formed and moulded after the highest type of Hebrew character, and yet distinguished by all sweetly feminine qualities in her tenderness and trust.

One can imagine the home, frugal and well ordered, and yet never coarse or squalid, which such a husband and wife would gather around them, and we know the spirit in which it was administered. In its tone and aspect, and in all its circumstances, that sense of their royal ancestry which marked its godly and high-minded occupants, with the obligations which were thence entailed—would make itself perceptible. The events connected with the Incarnation had brought upon both of them the severest trials. The trustful generosity of Joseph had been exercised and proved by those trials, and so also had Mary's courage and her submissiveness. 'Behold the

handmaid of the Lord. Be it unto me,'—whatever the suspicion and contumely of which I am the object, still be it unto me—'according to Thy word.' The suffering brought on by the occasion, bound them yet more closely to one another. Grateful affection on her part, and generous trust on his—trust which was so justified and strengthened by the portents that accompanied the Birth—secured and riveted that mutual love and reverence which are the basis of home life, and which, as we shall see, were so especially becoming in a purely Jewish household. And these qualities were at once urgently needed to support them in the efforts which they were called upon to make when they removed, for a while, from Bethlehem into Egypt. For there they were in a country wherein—although it was not entirely foreign, since extensive colonies of Jews had been long settled in the land³—unusual exertions were required from them, during the first two or three years of the Child's infancy. Well deserving of most careful attention is the fact, that it was amidst these efforts, amidst the toils and privations which were necessarily entailed on them by their stay in Egypt—that Mary and Joseph grew into that needful familiarity with the Infant Jesus, which their vivid remembrance of the solemn portents that had attended His Nativity would have made impossible in the daily monotonous quiet of their

³ 'Scripture Lands in Connexion with their History,' p. 233.

home at Nazareth. This arrangement of their affairs continued through an ordering, the wisdom of which we can well discern—until signs of opening consciousness were witnessed in the Infant. And then, at the end of two or three years, during which their movements are fittingly concealed, He came at length with His parents, as we shall call them, into the home and neighbourhood we have been surveying. There, under the tender and affectionately watchful care of Mary, who was ever anxiously pondering the wonderful circumstances connected with His Nativity, and instructed and cared for too by Joseph—Jesus grew up, through His earliest years, amidst the circumstances of a home which was in the likeness of one of those whereof we read so often in the after history. We may gather a distinct conception of the carpenter's house from the domestic allusions which we meet with in the fuller pages of the narrative, and may thence discern its form, its aspect and accommodation. In such a house He lived, 'waxing strong in spirit,' culturing and manifesting to 'His kinsfolk and acquaintance' in Nazareth, the understanding which, even in His early boyhood, excited so much wonder in Jerusalem. Nature in all her aspects and vicissitudes, the changing sky and seasons, the plains, the distant mountains—and Hermon, with its snowy summit, was there constantly in view—the neighbouring sea, the employments of the men around Him and their converse,

were daily and gradually drawing out, the mind, the affections, which appertained to the Humanity which had been assumed by Him.

Brief as are the notices of those early years, they are enough for an assurance which is beyond questioning, that they carried Him forward in true and actual contact with the common circumstances and transactions of human life in that time and place. And therefore we do not imagine, but we know, how His individuality was gradually realized by Himself while those years went forward. Through familiar intercourse with His thoughtful, highminded, devout mother, as they sat together in the house or as they walked through the lonely passes that led downwards from their mountain valley, or stood on that hill-top which brought into their view those historical sites on the associations of which she would naturally, with all the enthusiasm of one of David's daughters, dwell—through this intercourse, along with the graver and more measured teachings of Joseph, as he 'sat with Him in the house, and talked with Him by the way'—the human intellect of Jesus came into definite and realized possession of that knowledge which had dwelt substantially, potentially, within His soul from the beginning.⁴ So, again, the movements which were going on around Him; the labours of the craftsmen in their workshops; the agriculture of the

⁴ Canon Liddon's '*Bampton Lectures*,' Lecture viii.

neighbouring fields; the commerce, of which He witnessed expressive tokens in the ships that whitened the neighbouring ocean, and the slowly-pacing caravans that moved across the adjacent plain; the political disturbances and outbreaks that were constantly troubling Galilee, and which naturally centred round Herod's capital of Sepphoris, whose buildings glistened on the northern plain which there came within His view—all, in the same way, augmented His knowledge, and enlarged His consciousness. Coming thus into possession of the copious imagery which was afterwards reproduced in His teaching,⁵ He also gradually obtained a deeper sense of His personal individual life towards God, and of the relations with other partakers of existence, into which He was brought by it. His understanding opened, His soul 'waxed strong' through His docile reception of the influences and instructions con-

⁵ 'It was there, in the fields below the village, that he had watched how the lilies grew, and seen with what a gorgeous dress, in colouring above kingly purple, their Creator had clothed them. There, in the gardens, He had noticed how the smallest of all the seeds grew into the tallest of herbs. There, outside the house, He had seen two women grinding at one mill; inside, a woman hiding the leaven in the dough. There, in the market-place, He had seen the five sparrows sold for two farthings. The sheep-walks of the hills, and vineyards of the valleys had taught Him what were the offices of the good shepherd, and the careful vine-dresser; and all the observations of those thirty years were treasured up, to be drawn upon in due time, and turned into the lessons by which the world was to be taught wisdom.'—Dr. Hanna's *Earlier Years of our Lord*, p. 383.

veyed to it as He exercised that true childlike spirit which He afterwards commended, and which He then exemplified by submitting Himself in loving trust to all who had claims upon His confidence.

Unto His parents first, then to His elders and teachers, and to all who had claims upon His deference—He humbled Himself in a childlike spirit, and with that submissiveness which the older may everywhere claim from the younger inheritors of life. In modest self-repression and mistrust, He heard, and He also questioned, them, respecting the wonders which everywhere unfolded themselves within His view. Through them, and looking up to them, He gained His earliest information, and His impressions of the unsearchable wisdom and the supreme authority of His heavenly Father. By thus exercising the trust through which intelligence comes, He obtained the intelligence which is the reward of it.⁶ ‘If by an infused knowledge He was, even as a child, full of truth, He would yet seem to have acquired, by the slow labour of observation and interest, a new mastery over knowledge which He already in another sense possessed.’⁷ And at the same time He qualified Himself for accomplishing the duties and struggling in the conflicts, and for occupying in all other respects, the

⁶ ‘Crede ut intelligas. Intellectus enim merces est fidei.’—St. Augustine.

⁷ Liddon, *ubi sup.*

place and the relationships which were prepared for Him.

It was by means of these relationships, through which He showed 'how portions of our individual existence become subjected to the laws and conditions of more general life, and for what ends that which is thus sacrificed, has been thrown into a common fund'—that He came at length into definite possession of man's personal consciousness, and disclosed its true embodiment. Through the connexions into which He accordingly entered we shall now follow Him, and observe His discharge of their duties and obligations while He 'increased in wisdom,' and 'waxed strong in spirit' by means of them.

CHAPTER II.

FAMILY AND HOME LIFE.

THE first relationship into which He entered with this view, was seen in His Home Life—the life through which every man is appointed to pass as the member of a family and household, and which appears to form an essential part, not of man's condition only, but of the Divine Order of the Universe.

For there is reason to believe that it is out of families, as their elementary constituents, that larger societies and associations have everywhere been formed. Is not this fact betokened by the fatherly name of God? And does it not follow from the statement that the heirs of immortal being have been created in the 'Image of the Son'? The domestic constitution appears indeed to be grounded in the Divine Nature. Nor is its existence indistinctly betokened by the mention of societies existing elsewhere in the universe, such as can hardly be looked upon as mere aggregates of individuals. The 'thrones and dominions,' the 'principalities and

powers,' of which we are told, surely imply an earlier association of their members in households; and indeed the existence of such households appears to be explicitly affirmed when we read of 'every fatherhood of heaven'¹ in connexion with the inhabitants of earth. Moreover, with these intimations on the subject, the notices of man in his unfallen state, when he was brought into association with the sinless communities of the Divine Kingdom, are strikingly accordant. And so also is the signal honour attributed to the household tie throughout the inspired history, for does it not continually remind us that 'God setteth the solitary in families'? Nor should we omit to add to these reasons for believing in the universal prevalence of the domestic constitution, its fitness—nay, we may even say, its indispensable needfulness—for the moral and intellectual training of the younger inheritors of being. Exercises of self-control and of humility, such as are required in this position, prepare them for meeting the larger requirements of law; while the efforts of trustful love which it demands, give them individual possession of the treasures of knowledge and sentiment which belong to their community. We may observe, too, that, besides fitting its members for wider relationships, it aids in their personal development: by means of their family ties they obtain a fuller and firmer possession of their own consciousness.

¹ *πᾶσα πατριὰ*, Eph. iii. 15.

Life truly lived in the household brings out the individual life in richer development, besides qualifying each member for a larger range of activity, and an intenser fulness of emotion.

When these considerations are borne in mind, we can hardly question that life in the family may be looked upon as an essential portion of the heavenly pattern of existence; and, consequently, that its living manifestation in normal and complete development entered into the mission which the Eternal Word became incarnate to fulfil. Nor can we imagine any circumstances in which it could have been exemplified more perfectly than in those of a Jewish family, and especially of such a family as we know that of Joseph and Mary must have been, when we bear in mind the remarkable position which they occupied.

In a Jewish household we find all the arrangements and influences that are required for the elementary development of moral natures. The ideal home and family life of man had been obscured, 'its heavenly pattern' had been spoiled, by his apostasy; and one end of those special communications which God has conveyed to him from the beginning, has been its restoration according to its original design. When accordingly we look into the Mosaic ordinances, and learn what were the general habits and tone of domestic life amongst the Jews, we find, as might have been

expected, that the very ideal of home is realized. In that guarded sacredness of its relationships which is so significantly marked by the genealogies of the Old Testament, and the manifestation of which was doubtless one of the reasons for inserting them; in the authority which was exercised by both parents; in the tenderness and care enjoined on them, and the reciprocal obedience and trust required from their children—we see provisions for that very condition of household duty and relationship which might be looked for in the homes of the unfallen. What the *πατριά* of heaven are, the Jewish *πατριά* was meant to be.² And such, in fact, it almost was in those old Hebrew families which Joseph and Mary, as ‘Israelites indeed,’ would regard as their standard and example. For it would be in the spirit, as well as habits of the true patriarchs and elders of their people, that they obeyed the domestic ordinances which the Law enjoined,

² The carefully-guarded sacredness of their family life may be clearly discerned throughout the history of the Jewish people. Seen first in the households of the patriarchs, and then during the abode of the people in Egypt, we find it afterwards systematically ordered and secured by the laws of Moses. The chief *distinctions* of his domestic legislation, after carefully providing for the purity of the household (Levit. xviii.; Deut. xxvii.), were these: (1) Authority over their children was shared by *both* parents (Levit. xx. 9; Deut. xxi. 19); (2) While reverent obedience was strictly required from children towards their parents, affectionate heedfulness on the parents’ parts towards them, was equally demanded (Deut. vi. 7, xi. 19; Psalm lxxviii. 5—7); (3) Only through the family, as son and brother, and as husband, could the Hebrew take any part in the business of the nation (Numb. i. 4, xxvi. 2).

and which the prophets had enforced by the strongest exhortations, as well as by emphatic warnings of the results which would surely follow, in this instance, from neglect and disobedience.

Moreover, in Joseph's position at Nazareth, where he was placed in the very front of those heathenizing influences, against which such a man would always be zealously intolerant, every characteristic distinction of a Jewish household would be brought out, and all its peculiar features rigorously insisted on. Conscientious, earnest son of David as he was, he would feel that he was called upon to maintain an inexorable protest against the laxity prevailing in his neighbourhood. His home, therefore, was eminently fitted for the manifestation of that typical example of family life which was to be exhibited therein. And this will be recognized more clearly, when we examine its particulars, and follow Jesus in the discharge of His household duties; first, in the earlier portion of His course, where they were chiefly marked by subordination and submissiveness; and then in the later, and more active and arduous, sphere of their fulfilment.

Looking, then, at the earlier developments of His household life, we are first reminded that 'He was subject to his parents.' He 'honoured His father and mother,' implicitly trusting them, as the words imply,

and submitting Himself lovingly to their behests. Recognizing the parental authority as representative of the authority of God, and its utterances as the utterances which came nearest to Him, of the Law by which the Divine Order is maintained—He carefully obeyed it, and, in a godly spirit, He subjected His human will and wishes, and conformed all the details of His household life, to its requirements. He thus obeyed His parents as those who were Divinely invested with authority, honouring them, receiving their instruction, and even submitting meekly to their rebukes when He was misunderstood by them.

Having the pattern form of family life, as it exists among the unfallen, in His view, such acts of deference and courtesy were shown by Him all through His earlier years, as well as afterwards. Nor were the ordinary influences of self-will alone resisted, but those also which might have taken the guise of religious scruples and pious conscientiousness. Under no pretexts of devotion did He withhold from His parents anything by which they might have been really ‘profited’ by His means. It was never kept back by any use of that Corban plea which He afterwards condemned with such severity.³ The offerings of service and possession, which He made in His Church character, were always made from the residue which was left after He had fulfilled

³ Mark vii. 9—13.

every one of those home duties for the discharge of which the Church had been instituted to guide and strengthen men, but which it was never meant to disparage, much less to supersede.

Nor was it only in trustful dependence on His parents, and cordial submission to their authority, that the laws of family life were typically observed in His demeanour. Such observance was also shown by His familiar and fraternal intercourse with those who were in the same position as His own. We say 'fraternal' intercourse, because whatever was the relationship which actually subsisted between Him and those who are spoken of as His 'brethren and sisters'—every allusion to that intercourse shows its closeness and its intimacy.⁴ Evidently He lived an undistinguished life in the midst of them. In a home restricted by special limitations as His was, with narrow resources, and commonplace if not rude and ungenial companionship, daily and hourly occasions would arise for efforts of self-control, for submissive

⁴ 'Full information on both sides of the much-disputed question as to the nearness of Christ's relationship with the other members of His family, is given by Prof. Lightfoot in his *Epist. to Gal.* pp. 247—282. It is worth observing that, while the intimacy of His connexion with them, whether brothers and sisters, or cousins, was shown by their being among the last who learned His true character, the fact that they did, at length, yield, and that they acknowledged Him Whom they had regarded as an ordinary relative, to be none other than the Messiah, largely increases the value of their testimony.'—*'Divine Kingdom, &c.,'* note, p. 188.

deference to the will of those around Him, for acts of kindly concession to their infirmities. And all these occasions were faithfully and cheerfully met; the duties involved in them were discharged lovingly and punctually. Every precept which He himself, and His Apostles afterwards, under His direction, delivered to this effect, was observed by Him. And therefore we may be sure that gentleness and tender consideration for the needs of others, ever marked His demeanour in the household. Moreover, He embodied all this department of human life in a heavenly spirit, 'in the Lord,' and according to God's will, as His Apostle afterwards enjoined. Amidst all the trying occasions of His trying life, He thus fulfilled the 'royal law according to the Scriptures,' doing to others as He would they should do to Him, and loving those in His household as Himself. He regarded them as 'heirs together with Him of the grace of life;' and with this sense of their relationship, He bore their burdens; He was heedful of their needs, and covered their infirmities; He mourned with them in their sorrows, and was gladdened in their joys. We have the clearest witness to this effect in the statement that Joseph and Mary sought Him amongst their 'kinsfolk and acquaintance.' 'The parents of Christ,' says Bishop Hall,⁵ 'well knew Him to be of a disposition, not strange, nor sullen or stoical, but sweet

⁵ 'Contemplations on N. T.,' book ii.

and sociable; and therefore they do not suspect that He had wandered into the solitary fields; they supposed He had spent the time and the way in the company of their friends and neighbours.' Moreover, it is further illustrative of the same fact, that they, even His own 'kinsfolk and acquaintance,' were among the people who had most difficulty in recognizing His Messiahship. It is said that 'neither did His brethren and sisters believe on Him.' Surely that unbelief of theirs was markedly significant of such an actual simple participation by Him in their common life, as that which we have indicated! They could not think of One who had thus been in all respects 'like unto His brethren' as being so unspeakably higher than themselves.

Looking at the home in Nazareth as it is seen in the light of our knowledge of the place and its surroundings, and firmly holding the assurance that Jesus therein embodied the laws and spirit of the celestial *πατρίαι*, observing the precepts which had been inculcated by Moses and the Prophets, and were afterwards set forth afresh by Himself and His Apostles—we may be certain that He thus honoured His father and mother, and was thus kindly affectioned towards His brethren.

Nor was this exemplary discharge of family duties seen only in the privacy of home life, and with reference to the obligations therein which He was called on to discharge. It was seen in public developments, on

occasions of mourning and festivity. That funeral which He met, not far from Nazareth, at the gate of Nain, was not the only scene of that description at which He had been present. Had He not been called to weep with His mother on the occasion of her bereavement, and to stand as one of the mourners beside His foster-father's grave? Nor could it either have been an unusual circumstance in His history, when afterwards He was invited with His companions to a marriage feast. The habits of His public life, the allusions and illustrations of His teaching, betoken long familiarity with everything that took place on occasions of this kind, with all their incidents, and with the feelings, good and evil, that were brought out by them. We are here thinking of His after presence at festal gatherings, like that in Levi's house; and of His parables, such as those of the great supper and of the wedding guests; as well as of His admonitions against the obtrusive selfishness, the vulgar pushings for precedence, which, no doubt, He had often witnessed in such scenes.

We certainly gather these suggestions as to His demeanour in His earlier and youthful course, and amidst occasions on which acts of submissiveness and subordination were required from Him. But, further on in His path, in His early manhood, when circumstances

demanding His strenuous discharge of the more arduous duties which grow out of the domestic relationships—there are the plainest indications that these requirements also were always duly and punctually fulfilled. Every injunction concerning the more active services of filial piety which is laid down in the Old Testament, was faithfully obeyed, and its highest examples—in His laborious care for His parents, and for those of His kindred who looked to the elder members of their household for help and counsel—were copied in His demeanour. In His discharge of all the family obligations that were appropriate to the later years of the period about which we are now thinking, the ‘commandment of God’ was not made ‘void by Him :’ He duly rendered everything whereby His family might be ‘profited’ by His exertions. Definite illustrations of this statement are suggested, if they are not explicitly furnished, by the narrative. It has always been held that the silence of the Evangelists respecting Joseph after his appearance at the visit to Jerusalem, can only be explained by his death at some period before Christ’s public ministry began.⁶ And from this it follows that the support of His

⁶ That Joseph died before Christ’s public ministry, is plainly implied by the absence of any mention of him in the Evangelists’ narrative, as well as by the emphatic designation of Christ as ‘the carpenter’ (Mark vi. 3). And, indeed, the fact seems to be explicitly intimated by His commendation of Mary to the care of St. John who was commanded to receive her as his mother, in

widowed mother, and the care and government of their household, had, and possibly for many years, exclusively devolved on Him. It is plainly in accordance with this conclusion that He is spoken of as 'the carpenter,' an expression which seems to imply that He had been summoned to meet the duties of the 'good man of the house,' in the position which Joseph had previously occupied.

These conclusions may be securely drawn respecting His family course through the whole period before His public ministry began. And these characteristic features of His life are brought out more fully when we bear in mind the disturbing influences which operated there, in that time and place, and which had such a tendency to loosen family ties and obligations. We are referring to the enterprises and excitements of the age, as well as to the corruptions prevailing over Gentile Galilee, which appeared to call for instant protest and resistance, and which found the focus of their power and attractiveness, only a few miles from His dwelling, in the neighbouring court of Antipas, at Sepphoris, which was full within His view. We feel indeed at once that the merely dissipating influences that surrounded His position could have had no power over Him. 'One look from His majestic brow, Seated as on the top of Virtue's hill,

consequence of which command, and 'from that hour,' 'he took her to his own home' (John xix. 26, 27).

Discountenanced' them all. But then, what wrongs were being perpetrated within His observation! What errors were then proclaimed that seemed to call aloud for His instant protest and denial! What promising enterprises claimed His help! Indeed, every motive that has at any time unduly, although nobly, led men away from home ties and obligations, presented themselves to His human spirit in that place and hour.

Nevertheless to these He firmly clung through the entire period, because they had the first claims on Him, and it was by their discharge, carried forward in such a spirit as we have witnessed, that His individual existence was raised and perfected. In His obedience to His parents in the Lord, and His mindfulness of the wants and infirmities of those with whom He was connected—He 'waxed strong in spirit' and 'increased in favour with God and man.' And thus He grew into the character which was afterwards recognized by the Voice from Heaven which said, 'This is my beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased.'

Nor can it be questioned that His domestic life during the public ministry to which He was then called, was in perfect unison and keeping with His habits of the same kind during the years we have been considering. It is certain that He did not then live in solitude, and that He had not joined any ascetic community, such as those which existed among the Essenes in the valleys near

Jerusalem. The emphatic mention of 'the house' in Capernaum,⁷ where it is plainly implied that His mother lived with Him after her bereavement, till St. John 'took her to his own home;' the allusions to His family; His tender intercourse with the children who were brought to Him; His appearance at domestic festivals, such as the marriage of Cana, 'the feast which Levi gave,' and the entertainments in the 'houses of the chief Pharisees'—show decisively that, after His public ministry commenced, behind and amidst its prominent occasions, He lived in domestic intercourse with those who are called 'His brethren,' and that He probably still employed considerable portions of His time in His previous occupations for their maintenance. Those allusions to special seasons of retirement which we meet with,⁸ fall in with this conjecture as to the manner in which many of His days—and it may be a considerable portion of each day—was passed, and as to His personal habits at this period. Moreover, the familiarity and frequency of His references at that time to the common incidents of family existence, to the domestic economy in every part of it, to the daily customs, nay, even to the ordinary utensils, of the house⁹—show in what associations and habits He was then, as He had previously been living.

⁷ He was 'at home' (ἐν οἴκῳ) at Capernaum. Mark vi. 2.

⁸ Matt. xiii. 14; Mark vi. 31; Luke vi. 12.

⁹ Matt. v. 15; Mark vii. 4; Luke xi. 39.

That tenderness, also, and consideration which was manifested in His home intercourse during the earlier period, must have distinguished Him throughout the later. His 'kinsfolk and acquaintance' would remark that just what He was at Capernaum and Bethany, He had always been in Nazareth. And, along with His modesty and kindness, with His noble self-repression and control, with His constant mindfulness of the wants and feelings of those nearest to Him in His home—we may well connect His unbroken calmness, His habitual freedom from disturbance. Those injunctions which He delivered concerning the *μερίμναι βιωτικαί*, the life distractions, of family existence, had long been practised amidst the narrow means, the humiliating cares and perplexities, of a poor man's household. Here, especially, in His later habits and injunctions, we see what His earlier course must have always been amidst all domestic 'troubles and adversities,' when He 'cast His care' on His Father who was 'caring for Him.' Often, doubtless, at the table, and by the fireside, of the Nazareth household, that familiar scene in the house at Bethany had been anticipated.

And there too, amidst the humiliating anxieties and perplexities of His earlier household life, the solemn reproof had frequently been heard, '*Thou art careful and troubled about many things.*' Nor can I, do I, blame thee for an earnest regard to them, since they belong to man's

family life, and to his domestic bonds. Only keep their place in relation to the 'one thing needful' constantly in view. Administer them from the soul's true centre. Think of them as they are explained by the great object of human life, by the reason why we have been called into existence and placed on earth, and been summoned to these duties. In the light of that high purpose let us look on all our obligations, and let us regard and administer them with that purpose constantly in view.

With unbroken calmness that may be fitly expressed in such words as these, he lived out the appointed course through which every inheritor of being in the Divine Kingdom is prepared for wider spheres of life and service. The order and purity, the love, the serenity and blessedness, of the heavenly 'fatherhoods' were thus completely reflected in His person and proceedings. Nor was the reflection ever disturbed by the influences then surrounding Him, which so mightily tended to mar the embodiment, and destroy its influence and its instructiveness. We thus perceive with what solemn authority, and with how high a sanction, He thus surrounded the earliest and most elementary constituent of the larger societies into which men have been incorporated. This fact that, in the 'Life, which was the Light of men,' because in it the Divine Economy was perfectly reflected—family existence was thus lived out in all its parts and aspects, and in the most difficult

scenes of its development, confirms, with a proof from which there is no appeal, our assurance that the discharge of home duties and relationships is the first and most incumbent of the obligations which devolve upon mankind.

And it may well be added, that His 'waxing strong in spirit' amongst those duties, and His 'increasing in favour with God and man,' therein—is a certain token that in household life the highest forms of man's individual existence may be perfectly developed. There the noblest qualifications and the mightiest strength may be obtained: there men may be fitted for the highest and most arduous duties that can ever devolve upon them in those larger spheres into which families have been incorporated.

CHAPTER III.

LIFE IN THE COMMUNITY.

THE next scene in which faculties and affections that have been trained in this manner, are exercised, is found in that aggregate of families dwelling in any well-defined locality, which we distinguish as a community. In such an aggregate the households of that neighbourhood are connected; and unions of this kind enter into the still vaster and more general forms of the Divine Order. Of this Order they are essential constituents; and into one of them, therefore, Christ entered during the period we are surveying.

In virtue of that same law of mutual compensation and helpfulness out of which families originate, villages and cities have been constituted. From the nature of their constitution, adjacent households must thus join and connect themselves with one another. And looking still further outward, it may also be affirmed that the existence of these larger unions is necessarily implied in those which are still vaster, even in the 'principalities

and powers,' the nations and kingdoms, which we know are universally existing. In other words, there is reason for believing that the local associations which lie next outside of, and which include, the families of earth, are found in all worlds throughout the Universe. Certainly they were contemplated as an essential part of the Mosaic polity. Communities made up of households that were locally adjacent, and then passing, through a natural development, into provinces and nations, are constantly referred to in the statutes of the Hebrew legislator. And, since they were Divinely framed and ordered, and were administered by a typical people upon a pattern land, they may well be looked upon as manifesting the exemplary form after which all states were intended to be fashioned.¹ How far the Mosaic ordinances, under this head, had been modified among the villages and towns of Palestine when Christ appeared; in what manner the communities of Galilee were related to the nation, so far as the Jewish people formed a nation

¹ The typical, pattern character of Palestine, and also of the Jewish people, is well worth remarking in connexion with our entire subject. 'Set in the midst of all other nations,' the appointed home of the Israelites presented what may well be called an epitome and sampler of all other lands. And so of the Jew it may be said that in him the temperament of every nation, all the phases of humanity, have been reflected, and that every form of man's development has been seen in his demeanour. Obviously it was in just such circumstances, in such a land and among such a people, that the ideal of humanity could be best embodied, and the entire course of man's life pictured forth in its completeness.—'Reasons of Faith,' chap. viii.

at that time—is indeed uncertain. There is reason to believe² that they existed in their natural order, and that the municipal affairs of such places were administered by deputies from the Chief Council in Jerusalem, who acted under the control of the Herodian princes and of the Roman Government. Some such management of the civil and ecclesiastical business of the towns of Lower Galilee probably took effect through the years of which we are now thinking. But, whatever its exact nature, we cannot question that corporate and civic, as well as household, life formed part of the Divinely appointed Order under which Christ lived; and therefore that He fully entered into it, and took His share of all its burdens and responsibilities.

Passing from the household into this next larger sphere, He fulfilled, or we may rather say embodied, during the years we are thinking of, the maxims which He Himself afterwards uttered, and which He instructed His Apostles to deliver. All those acts of duty and beneficence, those habits of self-restraining and self-devoted kindness, which we observe in Him on the occasions of His public ministry, had been already and were still always witnessed in the quiet and secluded scene of his existence; and the lessons which were openly taught by Him, and which needed such a sphere as this for their fulfilment, were through all the years of His

² Josephus' *'Life,'* sect. xii.

earthly life, and long before they were publicly delivered, diligently practised by Himself.

Our conviction that His public course was continuous and uniform with that which He had previously fulfilled, and therefore that His habits in those earlier years can be inferred from it—makes this conclusion certain, however freshly the facts which it brings forward may present themselves through our common disregard of them, and our strange neglect of the sources from which authentic information on the subject may be obtained. When they are carefully investigated, His life as a member of the community, is in every part of it presented to our view, as distinctly as any portion of His course as Man amongst mankind. We see it conformed to our ideal of this enlarged sphere of our existence, and especially in respect of the productive and systematic diligence by which He was therein distinguished. It is well known that the rules of the Jewish communities required every one of their members to follow some clearly defined pursuit and occupation. Then, as afterwards, it was a current maxim among the Hebrew people that, ‘He who teacheth not his son a trade, teacheth him to steal.’ Moreover, it is expressly said that the ‘form of a servant’ was characteristically assumed by Him; and we are, besides, distinctly told that He followed the occupation of His reputed father.

It is therefore quite certain that in Joseph’s work-

shop, and also in the houses of the town and neighbourhood, where the carpenter's occupation was carried forward—He was employed in steadfast and continuous, in quiet but strenuous toil. There He was engaged on works which afforded better opportunities for associated labour, and which would supply occasions for wider intercourse with His fellow-townsmen, than any others to which He could have been appointed.³ In the very likeness of the true sons of industry, and for the larger part of His life, He was constantly occupied in pursuits which demanded skill and forethought, together with persevering, vigorous endeavour, and which were also productive, and practically helpful to the community of which He was a member. In fact, the very ideal of genuine work, of work followed by fatigue and exhaustion, was witnessed in the labours

³ In connexion with the obvious fitness of a carpenter's occupation for securing intercourse with His fellow-townsmen, we may observe that it also necessarily involved Him in negotiations outside the limits of His community. Assistance in His work from artisans engaged in connected trades, who were living in the neighbourhood—necessitated intercourse of this description. Through it He was familiarly acquainted with, and was Himself well known in, all the towns of Lower Galilee. Moreover, purchases of the materials of His craft would often take Him to the neighbouring ports, as, *e.g.*, to Ptolemais which was almost close to Nazareth, and to Tyre which was about thirty miles distant, as well as to Capernaum, which was one of the depôts of merchandize from Damascus and the farther east. In however strange an aspect facts of this kind may present themselves, attentive consideration will show that they must be recognized in order duly to appreciate the course of life which Jesus at this time pursued.

of Him who was recognized as 'the carpenter,' and who was ever 'diligent in business,' doing 'with all His might' whatever His hand found then to be done.⁴

For many years He took His place, as one of the artisans of the town, among the inhabitants of Nazareth, and in this character He shared their burdens, and interested Himself in their affairs and responsibilities, using also every opportunity of well-doing which occurred to Him. Here we may usefully refer again to the commonly accepted inference from the inspired narrative that Joseph died some years before our Lord's public ministry began.⁵ Assuming this to have been the case, it follows that His occupations must have been independently pursued, and through a considerable period, for His own support, and for that of His mother, and the other members of the family. Such a conclusion appears to arise necessarily from certain well-known statements which are made by the *Evángelists*; and if it be accepted, it brings out in marked emphatic illustration that aspect of His life which we are now contemplating. This next outlying sphere of duty must have been perfectly filled

⁴ Every one will recall Holman Hunt's wonderful picture which represents 'Christ gaining His bread by the sweat of His face, just as He may have been seen by His brethren in the workshop of Nazareth, at the end of a long autumn day, during which "the servant waiteth for his shadow."' "

⁵ *Supra*, p. 46.

out by Him, and filled in every imaginable part of it, if, indeed, He occupied for some years, as it so plainly seems He did, a position as the independent master of a household.

Yes, in every detail, it was perfectly fulfilled : all its obligations were discharged, in sedulous and faithful toil, as well as in acts of true beneficence. Nothing in His human course is more certain than that in His life as a member of His community, He proved Himself to be a 'faithful and wise servant' in the humble position which He therein occupied. Amidst the 'little things' which then engaged Him, His fidelity and high-mindedness were manifested. In conscientious toil and service, He then 'rendered to all their dues;' 'custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour.' Moreover, the duties of beneficence were there and then practised by Him, as well as those of loftiest and most rigorous integrity. He bore the burdens of His neighbours, and promoted, by zealous efforts of service and of sympathy, the public welfare of the society of which He was a member. Throughout that time also, as well as afterwards, and unrestrained either by weariness or by fastidiousness, He 'went about doing good.' When a 'brother trespassed against Him,' He sought to reconcile that brother by all the expedients which He afterwards commended. Nor was any unfeeling harshness practised by Him in exacting payment of the debt

and service which was owing to Him from those who were fellows in His servitude. No Lazarus lay uncared for at His gate. Whenever He met any wounded, languishing travellers upon the roads which He then traversed, He forthwith bound up those sufferers' wounds and, in tenderest sympathy and foresight, 'took care of them.' He fed the hungry and clothed the naked, and visited the sick, 'considering' as well as compassionating 'the poor' and needy. In one word, He 'did to others as He would they should do to Him,' and He 'loved His neighbour as Himself.' Such conclusions respecting His habits are securely gathered from our certainty that He had always practised what He taught, and that His habits during His seclusion were consistently uniform with those of His public life and ministry.⁶ And with them agree the historical statements which bear upon that period; as, for instance, in that mention of the 'acquaintance' among whom they sought Him, and the increasing 'favour with man' in which He grew up, as well as in the general familiarity with His person through those earlier years, which is plainly betokened by His after

⁶ This backward reference and use of the precepts which Christ and His apostles delivered, concerning the personal and social duties of men in circumstances such as those amidst which He was placed—might be indefinitely extended. Such precepts may, in fact, be regarded as *historically* descriptive of His Incarnate Life, and of the method and temper in which every human relationship was discharged by Him.

history. In fact, every account of His personal habits which is given by the Evangelists, implies, nay, we may say, that they plainly indicate, the fact that, as He never separated Himself in any hermit-like retirement from family life, so, with His domestic, He perfectly blended a neighbourly existence in His community, that He actively engaged in its business, and cheerfully accepted its duties and responsibilities.

Holding fast our conviction that, as Man, He then lived from day to day a real human life in active intercourse with men, and using every source of information which is within our reach—we can see Him, not only passing through the ordinary routine of home pursuits and intercourse, but also taking His full share in the business and interests of the community—going into the houses of His acquaintance; buying and selling in the market-place; witnessing, nay, even innocently joining in, the local festivities; discussing topics of common interest in public assemblies; living a neighbourly and helpful, nay, what we may not irreverently or unfitly call a humane and genial, as well as beneficent, existence in the midst of them.

Thus He wrought at the works prepared for Him, the works which naturally presented themselves in that place and hour: with those works He was busied, and not with others chosen by Himself. In that quiet town, and among the simple people who were living there, in His

workshop and in their houses, He thus laboured, steadfastly and fruitfully, and as occasion called, for the good of His community, and for the help and welfare of those with whom He was immediately connected. And thus, besides disclosing in this manner the true form of that particular sphere of human life, He also perfectly obeyed, and, in obeying, He typallly exemplified, that law of 'functional service' which regards every one as holding in the Divine Order an appointed place which is, in the most emphatic sense, his own, and in which duties and obligations for promoting the common good have been specially assigned to Him.

This law obtains universally, but the most painful stress of its requirements is felt in the fulfilment of duties, such as those wherewith Christ was occupied, which have been laid upon men in their families and neighbourhoods. For its perfect realization and fulfilment, they must have a living perception of the system into which they have been incorporated, and of their own peculiar calling in the midst of it. Beyond their individual life, they must habitually recognize the organic existence which they are sharing, and must perceive the 'historic forces and common laws' by which it is vitally pervaded. Under this recognition, moreover, their efforts must be ruled by submissive patience and strenuous self-control, as well as by an utter trust in that Loving Wisdom governing the movements of the whole

frame-work, which is, indeed, the immoveable ground of its symmetry and fixedness. 'Not my will, O Father, but Thine be done,' must be the ruling motto of their lives. In the far-reaching harmonies of the Divine Economy, the results which flow from the efforts of any single agent can only be partially ascertained, and may be altogether hidden and unknown. And this is a trial of affiance under which all who overlook this view of their 'organic life,' and are possessed by the 'spirit of individualism,' naturally fail. Mistrustful of the Wisdom which placed them where they are, and assigned to each one the work for which he is best qualified, negligent of all seemly patience and needful self-control, they seek to anticipate the purposes of God, and would even endeavour to improve them. Thus they often go far away from homely scenes of toil and self-restraint where their work should be accomplished, to labour in other spheres, and hence instead of helping and furthering the purposes of the great fellowship of souls, those purposes are thwarted and contradicted by their means. In their unconsciousness of the far-reaching scheme of the plan which God administers, they throw its earthly developments into that confusion wherein they appear so frequently through the long progress of man's history, and frustrate many of the chief and most important ends for the accomplishment of which existence has been given.

In other words they depart from that Order, centered round the Throne of God, which Our Lord embodied, and of which this is one of the main characteristics that every agent has his own place in it, and an especial talent for his administration there.⁷ In the plainest and most impressive manner, He set forth this characteristic by His fulfilment of the lowliest duties that belonged to His position, just as He always declared it in His own teaching, and in that of the Apostles, whom He instructed. Through long and dreary years, and amidst the most trying intercourse with uncongenial companions, He did not His own will, but the Will of the Father who had sent Him. He was continually moved by the remembrance that He must be about 'His Father's business.' On this principle He bent Himself assiduously to His daily toil, industriously handling the tools of Joseph's craft, fulfilling His tasks and commissions as the carpenter, and steadfastly accomplishing every one of the duties of His position. Thus He gloriously reflected that law of the Divine Economy which requires every man to labour in the place and manner which has been ordained by God, trustfully leaving the results of his diligence to be invrought by its Ordainer into the great movements of His kingdom, always remembering

⁷ 'As every one has received a gift (ἐλάβε χάρισμα) so let him minister the same as good stewards of the manifold grace of God' (1 Pet. iv. 10).

that its advancement and prosperity depend on Him, and not upon ourselves.⁵

In this spirit, and in the practice of these habits, He lived through all those years in which the energies of His human nature were restlessly craving for another outlet, and while He was wrought upon by influences through which that restlessness was heightened. There, for example, was Herod's court full in view from Nazareth, with all its suggestions of basest corruption, and of treachery which ought to have been exposed, and put to shame and punished. In that one of 'the king's houses' He could daily see where His unfaithful countrymen, 'gorgeously apparelled,' and 'living delicately,' were prospering on the wages of their perfidy. Nearer home, too, and under His daily observation, He witnessed spectacles of baseness and disorder and misrule, of hollowness and insincerity, and of fearful wrong and wretchedness as the result—spectacles that might have carried Him far aside from His quiet but appointed path, under the most

⁵ The chief disclosures of the unseen world, as we find them in the visions of Micaiah, of Isaiah and Ezekiel, and in the Apocalypse of St. John, strikingly represent that 'functional service, as in a camp of living forces where authority is paramount,' which Jesus so marvellously exemplified—as being the universal law of spiritual existence. With veiled faces, denoting 'the absence, in spirits that are perfect, of all wish to display their own attractions, their willingness to go anywhere, to do any errands' of duty and love—the inhabitants of the unfallen world are represented in the very same active obedience to the will of God which He so perfectly manifested during the years of which we are here thinking.

specious pleas of patriotism and benevolence. Indeed every mischief which seemed to justify a relinquishment of the work to which He was appointed, that He might enter upon some other, seemed to cry aloud for His protest and resistance. But He never listened to those plausible but misleading invitations. Steadfastly resisting them, He still went on, doing the 'works that were there prepared for Him to walk in.' Still He patiently 'refrained His spirit, and kept it low,' until what He called His hour, with its proper claims of duty, had arrived.

Year after year, in the very likeness of what we commonly regard as dreary lives, was He thus, for fifteen years or thereabouts, quietly but sedulously occupied with dull monotonous work, which had nothing to commend it, except the motives of duty and of faithfulness. Nor is there any sufficient ground for the common impression that those occupations ceased after His public ministry commenced. On the contrary, many considerations make it highly probable that 'the house' in Capernaum which was then His home,⁹ was still a scene of habitual, though not, as formerly, of continuous, bodily exertion. For still, as formerly, the maintenance of His family devolved on Him; and doubtless it engaged His energies through some part of that large portion of the last three years which is unaccounted

⁹ *Supra*, p. 49.

for by the Evangelists. He still dwelt within the narrow bounds of His own neighbourhood, and, except on occasions which are expressly named, but a few miles covered the extent of His journeyings. Living in Capernaum amongst men who were earning their subsistence by manual toil, it is painfully incongruous with every conception of His character to suppose that, being, as He then was, in the fulness of manly vigour, He was dependent on the alms of the charitable, although the substance of the 'women who ministered to Him' may have been available for His support and that of His apostles during what may be called their missionary journeys. It can be hardly questioned that He continued in His toilsome pursuits, and in His trying intercourse with uncongenial companions, through those three years, still 'doing not His own will but the Will of the Father who had sent Him,' just as He had done it in the years which they succeeded.

With this view, however, of His 'functional service' as Man amongst mankind, we must not associate aught of gloom or weariness. Regarding himself as having been stationed in an appointed place amongst the armies of the Lord of Hosts, and realizing His corporate existence in this largest sphere of it—none of the moroseness, the sullenly hard persistence, which we sometimes recognize in such cases, could be discerned in His steadfast perseverance in the work wherein we are now

regarding Him, any more than it was seen in the more prominent labours of His ministry. The supposition that He ever manifested any spirit of that kind is indeed expressly negatived by that mention of the 'favour with man,' in which He habitually grew.¹ Nor, indeed, could such a demeanour in any wise co-exist with that true view of man's organic position which we know He entertained from the beginning, and which, all through His course, must always have given animation and ennoblement to His discharge of the most ordinary duties. For He wrought at them in view of the whole Economy into which they entered, and that Whole reflected its glory on the humblest details in which they called Him to engage.² As the Servant of God He then felt, and in this character He showed, that every one who cordially accepts his place, even though it be a lowly place, in the vast system of existence, becomes so identified with that system, that we may say he has a property in all its greatness and renown. Just as each limb and member has its share in the honour of the body, and as every individual who takes office in a society that is perfectly compacted, enjoys all its credit and distinction—so is it with the man who faithfully occupies his appointed place in the great system of the

¹ Cp. '*Home Life of Jesus of Nazareth*,' by the Rev. A. Gurney, pp. 53, 80. *

² Ephes. ii. 21, 22.

universe. 'All things' are his, 'whether the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come.' In His human character, Jesus habitually realized this truth. Amidst His dreariest tasks and occupations, He was inspired by the knowledge that notwithstanding, yea, rather because of, His 'form of a servant' in God's Kingdom, He was, since He served loyally, even then a sharer in all its glory and magnificence. And He knew too that this share was duly rendered to Him by the wise and good who then looked upon His work, just as the sincerest reverence and the lowliest homage of all holy beings is ever awaiting the humblest men who are intent on filling out their appointed place, and are there accomplishing the good works that have been 'prepared for them to walk in.'

Moreover, He was further animated by the knowledge that all those Divine forces which harmoniously converged on Him in that place—were there working with His own. Just as each limb, which obeys the laws of its activity while it is labouring in the body's service, is helped by the remainder, and fortified also by their life and strength—so, as He then showed, is every one upheld who occupies his true place in God's Kingdom, and is working there with an eye that is directed simply and sincerely towards the things which are given him to do. In and through the very nature of his position, all the powers of the Universe are working together with his

own, and He Who controls them all, is on the side of one who thus discharges his calling as a servant.

With this knowledge, that 'all things,' the security and welfare of the entire system in the midst of which He was labouring so faithfully, were vitally concerned in His success—there was always overcoming strength, though there was never anything like convulsive effort, seen in His exertions. Throughout them all, and amidst all the disturbances which they brought on Him, there was the deepest peace at the centre of His consciousness, as there must be in the consciousness of every one who is moving in his ordained path around the Throne of God. By His mighty energy, along with His unbroken calmness, He showed that, by the very constitution of the Realm which is centred round that Throne, victorious strength, along with the profoundest rest and peace, distinguishes the experience of the man who is serving loyally therein. The eye of such a one is always clear, and his nerve is always 'to true occasions true,' and his heart, even when wrought on most mightily, must be always steadfast and serene.

Here we see the secret of Our Lord's blessedness during those long years, when, with this estimate of His engagements, and thus supported amongst all dulness and weariness in fulfilling them—He came through the household into the community, and took His appointed place, and was recognized amongst its citizens. And

thus was man's entire life up to this point, afresh revealed by Him in its true form, and its binding laws were again enjoined on our observance. In the dreariest circumstances that can be thought of, He held to that Revealing Purpose under the power of the views which we have unfolded, and thus showed, more impressively than it could in any other manner have been witnessed, the Life which is the guiding, quickening, 'Light of men.'

CHAPTER IV.

LIFE IN THE NATION.

AND yet His life in that sphere, however completely and faithfully occupied, would have been imperfect, maimed and feeble, had it not passed into still wider developments. There was another Order in which His faculties and affections needed to be exercised ; and this Order embraces communities, as each community is formed out of, and is organically connected with, its constituent families.

The encompassing Sphere and Order of which we are here speaking, is the Nation. It may be defined as the aggregate of communities which are existing within clearly marked and recognized territorial boundaries, and which are united by common qualities of race and temperament, by ancestral history, and by general interests and sympathies. In this enlarged range and form of existence, the purposes of His Incarnation—which, let us once more remind ourselves, required Him to embody, and, by embodying, to reveal and afresh

authenticate, the true form of human being—made it necessary that He should also live. For we must recognize the national relationship as part of the Divine Economy of life; as an essential constituent of the framework through which God's design in the creation of immortal beings has been accomplished.¹ In this Economy, nations grow out of communities through a necessary enlargement, and by the working of the same principle of mutual compensation and helpfulness, as that which develops communities from families. The satisfaction of individual wants, and the supply of common needs, the growth of the Body by that 'which every joint supplieth,' the fulfilment of deeply-seated affections, desires, aspirations—are provided for by national societies. We may say, indeed, that they furnish an organ which is not only needed for the supply of many of the necessities of moral beings, but which is also essential to their effective exercise and their plenary development.

From the nature of its constitution, the Nation may therefore be confidently spoken of as one of those normal aboriginal forms of associated life which are found everywhere throughout the Realm into which men have been restored. And, accordingly, it is clearly discerned in those revealing visions of the Celestial World, wherein we read of its 'thrones and dominions,' its 'princi-

¹ Gen. x. 32; Deut. xxxii. 8; Rev. xxi. 24, 26; xxii. 2.

palities and powers.' These words, and their connected symbols, would not only be meaningless but misleading, unless such communities are existing in that upper sphere; unless a nation is indeed part of that 'pattern of things in the heavens,' in accordance with which the Human Economy of life which Jesus came to manifest afresh, has been framed and modelled.

How perfectly this pattern was copied in the Hebrew polity, is apparent in almost every page of the Old Testament. Throughout its history, its poetry and precepts, references to the national life of the Jewish people, as the ground of their earthly existence, are constantly occurring. The discharge of every obligation connected with that life was made incumbent, without any distinction, on all the members of the commonwealth. The constitution, the very designation, of their tribes; the law which compelled every Hebrew to enrol himself in the national militia; the dependence of the local on the general and supreme courts of judicature; the obligation which required every one of the people to attend the public festivals—made it absolutely necessary that every one in the position which Jesus occupied, should realize his position and character as a member of the nation, and recognize the claims and obligations which were therewith connected.² More-

² Dean Milman ('*Hist. of Jews*,' vol. i. p. 405) has some striking remarks on what he calls the 'unextinguishable nationality' of the

over, this consciousness must always have been deepened by the belief, which was never relinquished by the people, even in the darkest seasons of their history, that, in his national position, every Jew was entrusted with a charge which had most important bearings on the welfare of mankind. This sense of his place and his responsibilities was emphatically recognized and dwelt on in the Psalms, which were in popular use throughout all periods of the Jewish history; as it was the ground of the most frequent and urgent prophetic admonitions. Precepts, warnings, rebukes, addressed to the people in their national character, were constantly uttered by their seers and teachers, and were always listened to in the same spirit as that which inspired them. So that every Jew, and still more every one who was of the 'house and lineage of David,' must have felt his distinctions as a member of the commonwealth deeply and indelibly impressed on him. They could not be separated from his most ordinary con-

Jews in comparison with the comparatively languid and *destructible* patriotism of other nations, and on the means which have secured the feeling in such energy and permanent vitality. Of those means, as they are above enumerated, attendance at the public festivals, which compelled them often to meet and travel together in large numbers, and the presence of the Levites, under a secular as well as spiritual character, in every part of the community—were most effective in preserving the people from habits of narrow, sullen isolation, and in maintaining in them a vivid sense of their national interests and relationships.

sciousness; they constituted the very groundwork of his life; they ruled his existence in the community and in the household. And he must have regarded them too with animation as well as constancy. He must have exulted in his ancestral traditions, and in his people's history; and, when he remembered his country's mission in the world, how its typical monarch was to have 'dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth,' and how 'all families and kingdoms were to be blessed' in it—he would indeed 'rejoice in the gladness of his nation, and glory in his inheritance.'

From the nature of His position, it is certain that this part of the Divine Order must thus have been always witnessed in Christ's human character, and that this consciousness was entertained by Him. In His whole life it must have been embodied and reflected, and so proclaimed afresh as binding on mankind. Our remembrance of the purposes of His Incarnation justifies this statement. And we have distinct intimations, besides, that this characteristic was seen through all the years of His career as Man amongst mankind, especially when we bear in mind their consistency and oneness with each other.

For none of that mere cosmopolitan indifference in which He is sometimes represented—as, for example, by writers who have spoken of His 'great soul rising above

all national distinctions,' and of His 'standing forth, not as a Jew, but as a man'—was ever seen in Him. When we look into the documents from which, and not from our 'spiritual instincts and knowledge of character,' we can alone learn what Jesus really was, we are impressed by this fact, that He appears in perfect harmony and keeping with everything around Him. On Jewish ground He was a Jew, and was identified with all the Jewish institutions. Not only is it the countenance of a son of Abraham, with every Hebrew feature marked on it, that we are beholding, but we see that in every particular He has adopted the garb and social habits of His nation. In all ways He identifies Himself with the people amongst whom He was born, and in the midst of whom He lived. In fact He 'never showed His Judaism more conspicuously than when He uttered those invectives which have been adduced as reasons for divesting Him of His character as the Son of David, and for removing Him from the place which He occupied amongst the posterity of Abraham. Every occasion on which He manifested His spiritual nobleness, His entire freedom from all the unworthiness which we associate with the Judaism of that period—may be alleged in proof that it was a Hebrew countenance which looked with such indignant anger on prevalent corruptions; and that it was in a voice wherein we can recognize the tones of the best Jews in the purest eras,

that He so earnestly rebuked them.’³ It is therefore certain that in figuring Jesus comprehensively before our minds, we must not only regard Him as the member of a household, discharging all family obligations, and also as the member of a community bearing its burdens, and busying Himself with its responsibilities—but we must also think of Him in the character of a patriot, recalling the memories which were so closely associated with those historic scenes around Tabor, and Carmel, and Gilboa, which came constantly within His view. The heroic ages and examples of His fatherland; its great mission, so passionately dwelt on by the prophets, and which has yet to be accomplished—filled His human spirit, and constantly formed the animating themes of His discourse, especially when He dwelt on the national degeneracy, and anticipated the lamentations which He uttered so pathetically at the close of His ministry as He looked upon Jerusalem.

Moreover, it should be carefully observed that this aspect of His life was brought out with especial force, and was made signally impressive by the peculiar circumstances of His people at this period. It is true, indeed, that the national spirit was as strong in them as ever, but their country was now reduced to a position of entire dependence upon the great empire which, in the

³ ‘*Reasons of Faith; or, the Order of the Christian Argument Developed, &c.*’ (2nd edit. p. 54.)

rapid progress of its conquests, had obtained rule over the larger part of the country west of the Euphrates. Of this vast dominion Palestine was, at this time, but an inconsiderable province, and had been reduced into absolute, if we may not say abject, dependence upon the Roman power.

Throughout the whole country there was ever increasing excitement, discontent, and restless expectation. In Judea, especially, since no repressing influence there hindered its free development—the national spirit rose and was continually strengthened. Moreover, the tendency was there enhanced by the clear indication of their Sacred Books that a great era in the people's history was nigh at hand. The same feeling was communicated to the Hebrew families in Galilee. It exasperated their hatred to the Roman Power, and to every tendency in their own authorities which inclined to it. Hence excited feelings arose which were only kept in subjection by armed force. The military power was used with constant and unsparing severity by Herod in his anxiety to propitiate the Roman Government, although its officials in the country very probably looked upon the people more with impatient curiosity than with enmity or with disdain.

We can imagine one of them in the recently established capital of Cæsarea, describing the Jews to a new comer in some such way as this—‘Upon that hilly country

to which those passes, leading upwards, will conduct you, are communities of the most morose and gloomy and bigoted, and at the same time, most firm and energetic people in the world. They are only saved from extermination on account of their mutual strifes, by the vigilance and prowess of our troops. Although the province is one of the smallest in the empire, and inconsiderable in its own resources—for in these broad plains which stretch away to the south, you behold a large part of its wealth: treble their produce, and you have nearly the whole it yields—it is one of the most burdensome of our dependencies. I should however add to its own resources the income which it derives from the pilgrims who annually flock to it, and from offerings sent by communities of the same race, which is found almost everywhere throughout the world. Yet with all its riches, it is rather an encumbrance than an advantage to our government. Still the territory may not be relinquished. Should this people ever attain independence, and if they were only united they have energy enough to reach that end, and if then they should set up their Kingdom under that mysterious Ruler for whose advent they are looking—the consequence would be perhaps fatally significant. Once, at an era long before the foundation of our city, they ruled over an empire that included most of our Syrian territory. They probably expect to recover that dominion; and, were it not for their strifes, they might

succeed, for they are powerful and numerous almost everywhere. The cities of Egypt are filled with them; they form more than one-third of the population of Antioch; and you know how numerous they are in Rome.’⁴

Some such statement would have fairly represented the political circumstances of Palestine at the period under observation; and it may easily be shown that they were singularly fitted to supply a test which should bring out the spirit and demeanour of the truest, loftiest patriotism.

The characteristic marks of that spirit can be indicated unmistakeably. It is plain that one who was really possessed by it would never shrink from taking prompt advantage of every occasion which required a distinct and emphatic assertion of his nation’s claims and character. Clear of everything which might have the appearance of unworthy and timeserving compromise, he would earnestly range himself, after the manner

⁴ ‘*Scripture Lands in Connexion with their History.*’ (2nd edit.) pp. 309—311. The position of Palestine at this time has been well likened to that of British India under our own government. ‘The distant British monarch might be named as the parallel of the distant Roman Emperor. The Governor-General occupies a position much resembling that of the President or Proconsul of Syria, while the Governor of one of the Provinces is as the Procurator of Judea. The native princes, the allies and tributaries of the British Government, stand in the place of the Herods, the Agrippas and Philips; the kings and tetrarchs who ruled by the permission, and during the pleasure, of the sovereign foreign power.’—*Introduction to Dr. Traill’s ‘Josephus,’* vol. i. p. 28.

of the best among his ancestors, upon his country's side, and insist zealously on its standing and prerogatives, while at the same time he faithfully pointed out the causes of its weakness and degeneracy. On the other hand, he would not less carefully avoid everything like mere fanaticism in that direction; and he would always hold himself aloof from every desperate and frenzied enterprise which might aim at the recovery of merely outward political independence. Indeed he would not ascribe any value to such independence, when it could only be obtained and held by stratagem or force, without regard to the spirit in which such a possession should be treasured, and in an unmindfulness of that moral discipline through which fitness for holding it should be acquired.

Under such circumstances as those in which our Lord was living, this would evidently be the course of genuine patriotism. And how perfectly it was fulfilled by Him, may be learned from the expressive silence of the narrative, as well as from its explicit statements in those pages where His words and acts have been recounted in detail.

We have seen good reason to believe that His national position was, on all occasions, zealously assumed by Him; that His life throughout was manifested in Hebrew costume and expression. As was before said, not only may this be inferred from considering the pur-

poses of His Incarnation, but the fact is besides unquestionably established by the explicit testimony of the Evangelists, when we bear in mind the consistency of the later with the earlier years of His career. If we take their account of Him, instead of consulting our own notions of what He was and what He should have done—we shall see that there was hardly any habit or act through which He could have shown more clearly than He actually did show, that, in all matters belonging to His national character, He was ‘like unto His brethren.’ He observed their customs; He revered their authorities; He frequented their assemblies; He worshipped in their Temple; their institutions were supported by His offerings. Nay, even when He was rebuking their corruption and degeneracy, it was not to reason or philosophy, but to the Fathers of His people that He directed His appeal. In every possible way, and throughout His entire earthly life, He appeared in the position of a true son of David. From the very beginning of His course, He had habitually spoken upon subjects connected with the welfare of His fatherland, in the tones which afterwards were publicly used by Him. The sentiments, the memories and hopes, which befit an ardent patriot, were always in His mind and heart, and on His lips. Animated and exulting when He dwelt on His ancestral history, He mourned also over His people’s degeneracy, and inveighed against the blindness and

corruptions which were the causes of their deep humiliation. He sorrowed, too, with that same grief which He afterwards manifested when He wept over Jerusalem, and the days which He saw were coming through evils which were causing the land to fester into a carcase, upon which the eagles of retribution must be gathered.

Thus, unmistakeably did He show His patriotic attachment to His fatherland. And yet, with not less distinctness and significance, He always held himself aloof from the ungoverned, frenzied movements of the insurgent spirits of His day. Nay, more. There is good reason to believe that He emphatically discouraged them. It is well known that, at that time, Galilee was frequently the scene of rebellious outbreaks against the Roman Government which were undertaken by men who were desperate and frenzied by oppression, and who were often marked by purest sincerity and noblest zeal, believing themselves fully justified in their endeavours.⁵ And yet,

⁵ ' One of the most serious of these outbreaks, in which all Galilee must have been involved, took place in consequence of, and immediately after, the deposition of Archelaus. The increased tribute, which followed on the enrolment that had been made under Cyrenius, was made more odious to the people by the fact that it was farmed by residents in their towns and villages. The "receipt of custom," or tax-office, was in the midst of them: this badge of degradation was constantly in view; and their restless impatience under it fiercely exasperated the discontent which many already felt on witnessing the gradual heathenizing of the province: it shed fresh venom into the angry feelings which existed between them and their Gentile neighbours. Of this feeling the leaders of rebel bands—some of them being fanatics, some mere banditti—eagerly availed

while it cannot indeed be said that He coldly frowned on all those enterprises—for did He not choose one⁶ from the very parties who were engaged in them to be numbered amongst the Twelve—yet they never received from Him either assistance or encouragement. Milton's representation, which speaks as if at this time,—

‘Victorious deeds
 Flamed in his heart, heroic acts; one while,
 To rescue Israel from the Roman yoke,
 Then to subdue and quell, o'er all the earth,
 Brute violence and proud tyrannic power’—

is not only unsupported by the testimony of the Evangelists, but is quite out of keeping with every account which they have given of His temper and demeanour. They all convey the impression that, in the very spirit which afterwards led Him to ‘depart from those who

themselves, and in one instance with conspicuous success. Judas of Galilee, whether patriot or brigand, “drew away,” at this very time, “much people” to follow him. Intrenched in those spacious caves that are seen in the ravine which runs up from the Gennesareth plain, and which had harboured the robber bands that were driven out by Herod in his youth—it was a long time before they were subdued. But the outbreak, though quelled for a time, disclosed such restlessness and discontent, that larger bodies of troops were draughted into the country. Centurions, with their bands of profligate soldiers, were to be found in every considerable town of the province, such as Capernaum, Nazareth, Cana, and Sepphoris.’—*‘Scripture Lands in Connexion with their History,’* pp. 283, 284.

⁶ Simon Zelotes, or the Canaanite. The former designation of the Apostle is the Greek equivalent of the latter, which is the one used by Matthew and Mark. Each of them clearly indicates the fact that Simon had belonged to one of those insurgent parties out of which the sect of the Zealots had originated.

would have made Him a king,' He constantly refused to take any share in the insurgent movements which then were going forward, that from the mere fanaticism of the politicians of those days, He turned habitually and steadfastly away.

In such well-defined occupancy of His national position, in such a sincere and zealous acceptance of its claims as the ordinance of Him who hath 'divided to every nation its inheritance,' along with a persistent abstinence from all premature and impatient methods of accomplishing its duties—this sphere of life also was perfectly filled out by Him, and authenticated.

And amidst circumstances that were remarkably fitted for such a disclosure, He then, as one of the Hebrew people, showed by His words and His demeanour, what are the rules and laws of true political existence. They were so embodied in His Life as distinctly to make known in what manner they should be observed in every possible combination of events; by what method communities, which are made up of well-ordered families, and which are organically compacted according to the true laws of their association—may, however they are circumstanced, form themselves into nations which shall worthily take a place among the unfallen 'principalities and powers.'⁷ Just as He stood forth in this position, should they stand whose fatherland is honourably recog-

⁷ *Supra*, p. 74.

nized amongst mankind. And those who are living where it has been depressed, through the unfaithfulness of its sons, beneath its designed and just position, may also see how they also should demean themselves as patriots; as they may hence learn besides what are at once the lawful and the most effective methods through which their nation's place and prerogatives may be recovered.

In short, all the courage and self-devotedness, the far-sighted wisdom and noble self-control of the sincere lover of his fatherland, were witnessed during the years of His seclusion, as they were also publicly witnessed through the scenes of His ministry in Galilee and in Jerusalem. What the seers and prophets had already declared, and what in later days He and His Apostles taught to be the will of God in this department of man's social life—was visibly embodied in His own proceedings, in His acts, and also in His abstinences. Moreover it was so embodied amidst events than which none can be imagined as better fitted for accomplishing this one of the purposes of His course as man amongst mankind. We may say that in His political, as in His municipal and household life, the very ideal of existence was beheld in Him.

And every act in which He discharged these relationships was perfectly blended with every other in harmonious development, so that the works belonging to each never

embarrassed, or interfered with, those belonging to the others. As the three spheres of being, rising one out of the other, make up the beauty and strength of the Economy which is constituted by their union, so was it in His Person and proceedings. The symmetrical completeness of the Whole, as well as the entireness of its several parts, was therein perfectly reflected.

CHAPTER V.

CHURCH LIFE.

IN surveying our Lord's perfect embodiment of the Divine Order, as He thus harmoniously blended, in perfect fulfilment, one duty with another—we have, all along, observed His recognition of the relations in which He stood towards God, and towards the communities which are centred round His Throne. It was, plainly, in what the Bible calls a godly spirit, and under an habitual consciousness of the divine and celestial bearings of His earthly Life, that every trial and restraint in it was borne, and that all its active duties were discharged by Him.

And this is just saying, in other words, that He thought and spoke, and that He always wrought, as one who knew that this earthly scene of being has been incorporated into the heavenly sphere of purity and love, having been so blended therewith as to form one congruous whole; and that He showed that the perceptions and emotions of that higher sphere should rule men

everywhere, through all times and occasions, and in the discharge of every obligation. It was thus that, like the patriarchs of His nation, or, we may rather say, like those unfallen beings who are ever looking towards the Throne—He ‘walked with God.’ ‘God was in all His thoughts.’ Nay, He Himself declared, that, in His human character, as the ‘Son of Man,’ He was indeed ‘in heaven,’ while He was still busied amongst the duties, and was carrying the burdens, of His earthly course. He lived and moved and had His being there; His thoughts and affections were ‘set on things above.’ In every development of His personal life, in His household and community, and in His position as a member of the nation, this heavenly character and demeanour were observed in Him.

That calm and noble bearing which ever distinguished Him betokened one who knew that, as Man, He was even then living in the ‘City of God, the heavenly Jerusalem, amongst an innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect.’ But while this consciousness ruled Him at all times, and on every occasion of duty and of trial, it was chiefly shown, its most emphatic expression was witnessed—in His Church Life. It was manifested most clearly in His celebration of the worship, and His observance of the laws and ordinances, which belonged to the Divine Society into which He had been sacramentally admitted.

This Holy Fellowship had been established at the beginning of man's history, as a witness of his recovery from the loss which he had brought upon himself by his apostasy, and also as a means of perfectly delivering him from the effects of it, and re-establishing him in complete oneness with those communities which still abide in their allegiance. For these ends the Church was added on to the older associations which already existed in families and cities, supervening, as by a new creation, upon the aboriginal order of our being. We are told that every other form of human fellowship was beheld by the Apostle, when the Celestial Economy was revealed to him. Therein he saw communities, with their families and households; and he also beheld the symbols of royalty and empire. But it is expressively said that, as he looked through the farspreading scene, he 'saw no Temple there.' Unfallen beings have no need either of the instruction or of the help which are furnished by the Institution of which such structures are memorials. In man's circumstances, however, those requirements are urgent. He must be constantly reminded of his relationship towards God, and of his connexions with his fellow inheritors of being, especially with those past generations of mankind who are dwelling in the region of departed souls. And he requires helps, besides, in warding off evils by which his earthly existence is beset, and in accomplishing those purposes which the deepest

instincts of his nature assure him are those for which he was created.

Such are his urgent needs. And they are effectively provided for in the Church's society and ordinances. Instituted in the very beginning of our history, all men were meant to be embraced in it, and their welfare in all parts of their existence, and through their entire duration, has been contemplated in its institutions. Uniting, first of all, those who are locally adjacent, it enlarges itself, after the manner of all organic life, collecting the families dwelling in the neighbourhood of which each of its temples is the centre, into a fellowship as real as any of their civic or national associations. And this bond is of such a nature, that, in and through it, they are connected, by ties analogous to those of every living organization, with the aggregate of communities immediately adjacent to their own, and, through this aggregate, with the National Fellowship of which each community is one of the constituents. Moreover, it brings them into union with the societies of the unfallen; its ordinances are constant witnesses of the realities of man's position, and they are abiding channels of grace and strength for the fulfilment of those good works which have been prepared for him to walk in.

Thus, and under all these aspects, has this divinely instituted fellowship appeared to those 'holy prophets who have been since the world began.' They have always

beheld man's Church Life in this light of its original idea and constitution. The Church has ever risen thus before their minds in its entirety, and in connexion with the deep and widely reaching purposes for which it was set up. And if it would be an error to identify it with any visible society that is, or ever has been, in existence, yet neither may we speak of it as invisible when parts of its perfect form can be sometimes clearly seen, when some of its pinnacles and towers, of its massive bulwarks and rich adornments, are disclosed like those portions of a far-extending structure which we sometimes see, here and there, through the shadows of an evening gloom. It rises before the mind's eye as that to which they are all tending, and in which they are all explained and perfected.

This may be affirmed of every visible Church, which stands in living connexion with the past, and which, in the course of what we may call the providential ordering of man's affairs, has been developed from the Society which God set up in the beginning. At the time of which we are speaking, it existed, it was seen and its intention was expressed, in the Synagogues of Israel and in the Temple. And we are expressly told that Christ accepted every one of its relationships and obligations, and used its means of grace as channels through which the strengthening, quickening influences of The Spirit might be poured into His human nature, that so He

might be duly qualified for the discharge of every duty which, as man, He had undertaken. Through the ordinance instituted for that end, He was formally incorporated into the Holy Brotherhood. 'When eight days were accomplished for the circumcision of the child, His name was called Jesus.' When the 'days of His mother's purification were accomplished,' He was 'presented in the temple.' And that there might be no question that He truly entered into this Church estate, and sincerely accepted its conditions, we are emphatically reminded that He ever afterwards recalled the distinctions, and observed the duties to which He had been sacramentally committed. It is expressly said that 'it was His custom' to attend the services of the synagogue 'every sabbath day.' And in that obedience to the Mosaic ordinances which He habitually practised, He went up to Jerusalem at the appointed seasons to the festival services which were celebrated in the Temple.

Moreover He expressly enjoined others to fulfil, as He Himself did, all the obligations which the Church then laid on them. Even when He was inveighing most severely against the ecclesiastical corruptions of the day, and taking the severest measures to repress them, He called the Temple itself 'My Father's House.' He contributed to its resources, and enjoined deference to its authorities. In fact, there is hardly any page of His

earthly history in which this distinction of His Life is not brought forward. It shaped and coloured the entire groundwork on which His human character was wrought. The writers who have described His earthly course, assume that this distinction of it is always present to their readers' minds; that we everywhere see Him fulfilling the 'solemn vow, promise, and profession made for Him,' in His circumcision, and this in every relation of His life, as son, as neighbour and as citizen, as the companion of men, and as their teacher and benefactor. He emphatically reminded His disciples that He realized the Fellowship of which we are speaking, when He described Himself as the 'Son of Man in Heaven.' And He showed how this life is meant to be, and may be actually transfigured and ennobled when men 'have their conversation there,' and 'set their affections on things above.' His demeanour and proceedings in His Church position, as they were seen in such utter contrast with the mere sanctimoniousness of one party of the men around Him, and with the gloom and sourness of another; the openness and reverence, and the calm and lofty devoutness of His religious habits, as well as all His allusions to things 'eternal and unseen,' and to our duties with respect to them; in one word, the simplicity, and what may well be called the naturalness, of His Life in the Divine Society, plainly taught and showed how it was meant to raise the individual man; to heal

and quicken and ennoble him, as well as to purify and strengthen his social being in every one of its developments.

How the Synagogue was constituted, and what forms of worship and instruction were used in it, is as well known as are the particulars of any of the institutions belonging to that period.¹ Its antiquity is, indeed, uncertain; but, at all events, we know that it was then existing in every village as well as town where Jews were living, that it maintained the testimony which their people were commissioned to uphold and propagate, and celebrated forms of Divine service which Moses had enjoined on them. Prayers, in liturgical form, and compiled for the most part from the Inspired Writings; readings from the Law and the Prophets; instruction from men who were reputed to have deep insight into truth, along with prophetic exhortations—made up the Synagogue services, as they were then celebrated. Throughout, it was assumed in them that man had been redeemed, and restored into God's Family and Kingdom. They declared his union with 'angels and archangels, and all the company of heaven;' and they constantly reminded him of his connexion with the fathers who were then dwelling in Sheol or Hades,

¹ An account of the arrangements and services of the Synagogue at this time, is given in a Note at the end of this Chapter.

the realm of the departed.² Moreover, they expressed the grateful consciousness of men who knew by what a costly price they had been restored into God's Kingdom, and who acknowledged their relationships therein; and they also expressed contrition for every failure in discharging the duties which belonged to those relationships, and asked that strength might be given for their just and punctual fulfilment.

Such was the nature of the Synagogue worship, and such were the truths that were conveyed by it. Moreover, in the persons of its Elders and Ministers, and of the Council which was formed by them, and which appears to have been at this time in relations of dependence on, and subjection to, the Sanhedrim at Jerusalem—it exercised a control, which was guarded and enforced by the severest penalties, over all departments of Jewish life. It influenced, if it did not rule, the existence of every Israelite in his domestic

² It is certain (*see* Vitringa, and Art. 'Synagogue,' Smith's '*Bibl. Dict.*') that there were allusions to the dead in the prayers of the Synagogue. The real nature of these offices of devotion is matter of well-known controversy. But, in any case—whether they were simple acts of communion, or utterances of interceding supplication—they brought past generations distinctly into view before each worshipper, as part of the Society into which he had been incorporated. He lived in the presence of those amongst its members. He was consciously joined on to those spirits of the departed. They had a property in him, and he in them. In numbers constantly increasing, they were there assembled in Sheol, or Hades, to which Christ frequently alluded in His discourses, and which must have been always explicitly recognized by Him.

and social, and in his national character; sustaining and purifying all the relationships into which he had been brought. And, as we shall see, there is reason for believing that to this government of the Synagogue Jesus was habitually submissive; as it is certain that, by an unbroken custom, He joined in its prayers, and reverently listened to its readings and instructions.

We know, from His own words, what superstitions had gathered round these exercises; and how they had been disfigured and enfeebled in their celebration by habits of thoughtless, and even idolatrous, formality. Every corruption which has ever spoiled and perverted Divine Worship, was then seen in the Synagogue observance of the Hebrew ritual, although it contained, and chiefly in inspired words, some of the noblest proclamations of the Divine Law, and some of the most touching utterances of prayer and thanksgiving, that have ever been used in the devotions of the sanctuary. Yet, perverted and darkened as was this ritual, He sincerely and habitually worshipped by its means. Unhindered by the dulness and irreverence of those around Him, and looking through the corrupted methods in which these forms of Divine service were celebrated to the truths which were expressed in them, entering into their spirit, submitting himself meekly to the influences which they were intended to convey—He earnestly employed them all. The Schemah the She-

monch-Esreh, the Daraschoth were thus used by Him as affirmations of His Divine Calling, and also as channels through which grace was conveyed for its fulfilment.³ By their means He recognized, and, in recognizing, He bore witness to, the facts of man's redeemed position; communing with His Heavenly Father, and with all sharers of existence, in the use of them, and receiving fresh supplies of strength, and of quickening inspiration, from their testimony and assurances.

That very significant allusion by the Evangelist to His customary presence in the Synagogue, assures us that, all through the earlier and later period of His life, He thus joined in its worship, and listened to the instructions which were delivered in its teaching. Nor can we doubt that His explicit recognition of the salutary connexions which existed between the Church Institute and common life—as when He spoke of its influence in ‘reconciling the brother who had trespassed,’ and of the injunctions which the ‘scribes who sat in Moses’ seat’ were uttering—was also manifested

³ The Schemah consisted of three portions selected from the Law, viz., Deut. ix. 4–9; xi. 13–21; Numb. xv. 37–41. The Shemoneh-Esreh consisted of eighteen prayers, of which the greater part were said to have been composed by Ezra and his colleagues. And the Daraschoth, derived from the verb signifying ‘to inquire into’ or ‘discuss’ (cf. 1 Cor. i. 20; Titus iii. 9), was the sermon or exposition such as that which Christ Himself, as recorded by St. Luke (iv. 16), afterwards delivered.

through all His earthly course. Every Synagogue was meant to carry out the secular laws of Moses, and thus to raise the tone of thought and feeling in the families surrounding it, and strengthen the bonds which united their members to each other. Purifying, restraining, and ennobling influences were meant to flow out from its assemblies, through which the moral and physical welfare of the community might be promoted.⁴ Nor can there be any question that of those also among the uses of the Synagogue—by which, wherever it was found, the Church was represented—He was continually mindful. They were neither neglected nor disparaged by His means. On the contrary, both by His own obedience, and by the influence which He exerted—this part also of the Restoring Dispensation was fulfilled by Him.

In the same way, with the same spirit and purpose, He went up at the appointed seasons, at Passover and Pentecost, and at the Feast of Ingathering—for the purpose of taking part in the Temple services, to which those of the Synagogue were carefully conformed. That, from His boyhood He went—not only on the occasion named by the Evangelist, but—habitually, to Jerusalem, at the great festivals, will hardly be questioned when we duly consider His position and His purposes. Attendance on those festivals was obligatory on every pious Jew; and the details of His life, which the Evangelists

⁴ *Infra*, Part 2, chap. iii.

have given, show that by such men they were in those years celebrated habitually and earnestly. Mingling, then, unobservedly, amongst those faithful worshippers, the 'waiters for Israel's consolation,' the Simeons and Annas of the time, and also with the devout Jews who came as pilgrims to the Holy City from every region of the globe—Christ regularly took part, from His earliest years, in the impressive ritual which was then celebrated on Mount Moriah. From the first He manifested that same devoutness, in 'spirit and in truth,' which He afterwards commended. In that scene of the national assemblies, amidst the most stirring memories and associations, He openly recognized, and, in thus recognizing, He afresh proclaimed, the facts and the duties of man's redeemed position. He communed there with the fathers of His people, and with the denizens of that heavenly sphere wherewith our earthly abode is blended. And there, too, He received influences which strengthened and quickened Him in discharging all those obligations which, as man, He had undertaken to fulfil. Nor can we doubt that, on each recurrence of these consecrated seasons, He felt the 'gladness' of those who said, 'We will go up into the House of Jehovah. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.' He rejoiced with His brethren amidst the impressive services which were celebrated on Mount Zion; and, in that communion with them, He confirmed their submission, along with His

own, to the ordinances of Jehovah. In His common prayer and thanksgiving with them in the sanctuary of their fathers, He, like every pious Jew, renewed His energies for the faithful discharge of all the obligations which were in that place so solemnly enforced on their regards.⁵

Then again, besides realizing with signal vividness His Divine and heavenly relationships on those occasions, and gaining large supplies of 'grace to help' in their fulfilment,—He also looked upon the Sanctuary on Moriah as an impressive and conspicuous sign of those national purposes for the promotion of which also the Church was instituted. And as, by His own submission, and by His influence, He upheld the Synagogue in its beneficent working among the families of Galilee, so He regarded 'Mount Zion and her assemblies' as an instrument for raising the spirit of the nation; for counteracting its errors and corruptions, and joining its members in closer unity; and also as an agency for helping it to fulfil its mission in the world. He looked

⁵ That, at this period, Jesus regularly celebrated the principal feasts in Jerusalem, is implied in the habits of His family—whose rigorous Judaism was betokened by the fact that Mary accompanied Joseph to the Holy City—as well as in His habitual fulfilment of the Mosaic appointments. He was, therefore, familiar with Jerusalem, with its circumstances and spirit, long before His public ministry began. This fact is always assumed by the more thoughtful commentators on the Gospel history (*e. g.* Lange, '*Life of Christ*,' vol. i. p. 416, E. T.), as sinister inferences have also been drawn from it by writers of the Rationalist 'persuasion.'

reverently towards the 'Thrones of judgment in the House of David,' and zealously helped in sustaining their authority among the people. He always cordially joined in those expressions of world-wide philanthropy which the Hebrew anthems uttered so emphatically. 'Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,' He said, 'for Thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth.' 'O be joyful in Jehovah, all ye lands, serve Him with gladness, and come before His presence with a song.' He constantly remembered how it had been promised that 'out of Zion should go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem.' And He always pointed to the Temple as a witness that the descendants of Abraham had been called to stand forth among men as the typical patterns of the race; and that 'all nations' as well as families, were hereafter to be 'blessed' by their teaching and example.

With these views of its secular as well as of its spiritual uses in the Divine Order, He observed the ordinances of the Church, both in the Synagogue and in the Temple. Looking through their disfiguring environments, and the mischievous deadening corruptions that had been brought on them—to their real nature and their original intention, He received the knowledge that is conveyed by them, and the genuine influence which is imparted by their agencies; and He also showed how

they bear on the discharge of all personal and family and national obligations.

Reverently contemplating His life under these aspects, it may indeed be said that the archetypal form of the Church, and the essential purposes of its institution, were therein perfectly reflected. Many of His words and deeds are only intelligible on the supposition that He always recognized it as a disclosure of the Order in which the Will of God is truly and perfectly embodied, and as a system of divinely-instituted agencies for restoring men to perfect conformity with the true standard of their life, and for helping them to practise a perfect obedience to the laws by which all existence is controlled. The supernatural realities of which it testifies—in its declarations respecting the Sovereignty of God, the changeless order of His universe, the terms on which we hold our place amongst its families and kingdoms, the intercourse into which we are brought with them—and the obligations which hence devolve on us, all these testimonies, with the demeanour required by them, were habitually and clearly mirrored in His words and His proceedings. And His acknowledgment of them was especially manifested by His constant protest against those corruptions by which the Divine Society had been enfeebled and perverted.

For all the time that He was thus using the Church's ordinances, He faithfully and zealously protested against

the abuses which so misrepresented their character, and weakened their efficiency. It is true, indeed, that during the later period in relation to which His teaching and conduct are more fully described by the Evangelists, His denunciations of the Church evils of His time were most frequent and emphatic—as indeed became the prophetic character which was then assumed by Him. But we may confidently assume that He did not then first begin to utter them, any more than that He commenced in that after period an observance of ordinances which before He had neglected. We have the fullest assurance that, all through His previous life, He maintained the religious habits which we afterwards see Him practising, as they were subsequently practised by the Apostles under His instruction. And, therefore, it is quite certain that, while he diligently and devoutly used all the ‘means of grace’ that appertained to His Church position, He must often, even in His earlier years, have lifted up His voice, sometimes sadly, and sometimes indignantly, protesting against Sadducean cynicism and Pharisaic ostentation. Then, too, He condemned the cold formalism and false sentiment, along with the self-seeking plausibilities, of the mere religionists of that day and generation; while at the same time he denounced, with strongest vehemence, the men whom He saw polluting the Sanctuary with ungodly traffic, and making vile merchandize of its corruptions.

Then also he would impressively turn men's thoughts back to the great purposes for which the Church had been instituted, and to the purer, simpler days in which those purposes had been faithfully accomplished. He 'shewed the House to the House of Israel, that they might be ashamed of their iniquities.' And 'He helped them to measure the pattern, that they might keep the whole form thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and do them.'⁶

In this manner He fulfilled the duties of His Church Life by protest and conflict, as well as in the exercises of worship and contemplation. And while He lived and worked through common days and scenes amidst the glorious light thrown upon them from Sabbath hours and from the devotions of the Sanctuary, He plainly recognized every region of man's existence as incorporated in the Divine Sphere of His being, and as forming part of it. He showed how 'this world may be transfigured and glorified, and the world above substantiated and made ours, by their mutual blending' on the commonest occasions, and amongst the humblest, dreariest occupations.

⁶ Ezekiel xliii. 10, 11.

APPENDIX TO CHAP. V.

‘THE meeting of the congregations in the ancient synagogues may be easily realized, if due allowance be made for the change of custom, by those who have seen the Jews at their worship in the large towns of modern Europe. On their entrance into the building, the four-cornered Tallith was first placed, like a veil, over the head, or, like a scarf over the shoulders. The prayers were then recited by an officer called the “Angel,” or “Apostle,” of the Assembly. These prayers were, doubtless, many of them identically the same with those which are found in the present Service-books of the German and Spanish Jews, though their liturgies, in the course of ages, have undergone successive developments, the steps of which are not easily ascertained. It seems that the prayers were sometimes read in the vernacular language of the country, where the synagogue was built; but the Law was always read in Hebrew. The sacred roll of manuscript was handed from the ark to the Reader by the Chazan, or “minister;” and then certain portions were read according to a fixed cycle, first from the Law, and then from the Prophets. It is impossible to determine the period when the sections from these two divisions of the Old Testament were arranged as in use at present; but the same necessity for translation and explanation existed then as now. The Hebrew and English are now printed in parallel columns. Then, the reading of the Hebrew was elucidated by the Targum, or the Septuagint, or followed by a paraphrase in the spoken language of the country. The Reader stood while thus employed, and all the congregation sat down. The manuscript was then rolled up, and returned to the Chazan. Then followed a pause, during which strangers or learned men, who had “any word of consolation” or exhortation, rose, and addressed the meeting. And thus, after a pathetic enumeration of the sufferings of the chosen people, or an allegorical exposition of some dark passage of Holy Writ, the worship was closed with a benediction, and a solemn “Amen.”’—Conybeare and Howson’s ‘*St. Paul*,’ chap. vi.

Part II.

PUBLIC MINISTRY.

CHAPTER I.

BAPTISM AND TEMPTATION.

THIS view of Christ's Church Life, harmoniously blending, and firmly compacting all the other relationships that were sustained by Him, completes our survey of His habitual embodiment of the Divine Order, as it is intended to be manifested amongst men. We see it now in its entirety and perfection. Steadfastly gazing on the scenes of His earthly course as they appear beneath the historical lights which converge on them, instructed by all the means of information that are at our command—the very Ideal of human existence comes forth before our view, complete under every aspect in which it can be contemplated.

In an undistinguished position, amidst occupations and companions such as are allotted to the great majority of the human race, we observe every relationship fulfilled, every duty calmly and nobly, and yet unobtrusively, accomplished, in His household and community, in His nation and in the Church. Through His connexion with surrounding persons and occasions, and His heedfulness of all their just requirements—the common life of man, in its accustomed scenes, was there consistently and greatly lived. The virtues of the best men before His time were but faint gleams of that full-orbed refulgence; and, by all men since then the glory which was there beheld in Him, has been only dimly, brokenly reflected. Surveyed in relation to all surrounding things, Christ's ordinary human Life was evolved in complete and harmonious though gradual development. And it was also seen resting upon, and growing out of, past times and generations. In all His relationships He was united to the general mass of His predecessors upon earth, and, so to speak, He came forth from them. He inherited their attainments and possessions; their vitality was energizing in His person and associations; through innumerable channels, their life affected, moulded and determined, that which He lived during the years we are surveying.

This remembrance of His connexion with past generations, over and above that in which He stood with

the men who were then living with Him upon earth—is necessary to complete our view of His position as a member of the race, so that, in the fullest significance, His disciples may recognize Him, not only as the Son of Mary and the Son of David, but also as the Son of Man. Now, however, we must connect His common life with those larger forms of work upon which the attention of mankind has been chiefly fixed, and in which His embodiment of the Divine Order was brought out more fully and impressively. ‘His hour’ having at length come, He had then emerged from His retirement to enter on His office as a Prophet in the world.

He came forward in this character at the call of one who at that time was himself fulfilling the prophetic commission by Divine appointment. It was in the old likeness, which was so familiar to the Jews in their historical records, that John appeared, summoning the narrow, sense-bound, people around him to repentance and devotedness of life. Multitudes listened to his teaching, and obeyed his exhortations. But when Jesus of Nazareth was seen among them, the Baptist, in memorable language, declared that in His case there was no call or occasion for repentance; that, in the spheres which He had hitherto occupied, His self-dedication had been perfect, and His obedience complete. Nevertheless He reverently used the ordinance of baptism which John was

instructed to administer, for the purpose of announcing His entrance into that larger sphere of activity which He was now called to occupy. He thus obtained a fuller outpouring of The Spirit, through which the faculties of His human nature were raised and strengthened, while He also fulfilled 'all righteousness,' in other words, completed His accomplishment of the Order into which He had been incorporated.¹ And then, at that most eventful epoch, came forth an infallible Witness, that the impressions which must long have haunted Him, were true; and that, in the Person familiar to men, the Eternal Word was dwelling.

When He heard the Voice, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,' those thoughts and impressions which had probably long been stirring in the human consciousness of Christ were shaped into definite conviction and assurance, and He recognized the Divine Nature in mysterious union with the Manhood which

¹ It may be asked how could Jesus submit Himself to the baptism of John, which was 'a baptism of repentance,' and therefore implied the confession of sin. But the Apostle's words, 'He who knew no sin, was made sin for us'—furnish the reply. In His representative character He was regarded as sinful through His connexion with a sinful people. And His baptism was required by the enactments of Moses, on the principles of the Old Testament 'righteousness,' since not only were those excommunicated who had personally transgressed, but all who came in contact with them were involved in their excommunication, and the same cleansings which were needed in their own case, were also needed for the restoration of others who had become defiled through their means.

had been made perfect through His sufferings. Long before this time He must have learned the mysterious circumstances which attended His Nativity. Now He apprehended their significance; and, very naturally, in the amazement, if we may not say the agitation, which was consequent on this discovery, He went, under the leading of The Spirit, into the wilderness.²

In those few words the Evangelists describe this movement in His Life, and their statement points to the desolate region by which, on the south and south-east, Palestine is surrounded. In what part of this solitary desolation He abode, can only be conjectured. It was probably south of Judea, in one of the desert places that had been made memorable through the wanderings of David and Elijah. There He continued, for forty days, in devout meditation, and in an abstinence which was, at all events, extreme, if it was not entire, as the words of one of the Evangelists rigorously inter-

² The Mountain Quarantana, which overlooks the plain of Jericho, according to a tradition which, however, is of no great value (Robinson's '*Bib. Res.*' vol. ii. 303), marks the scene of our Lord's retirement and temptation. Thence He might pass into the wilderness country, south and south-east of Judea. This region, however, is very different in its character from the desert proper, or Arabah, which indicates the parched and desolate chasm extending from the Dead Sea to the gulph of Akabah. Here we find the 'waste and howling' wilderness (cp. Jer. ii. 6) of the Old Testament, which is quite unlike the region on the south of Palestine. This may be regarded as a moorland territory, being distinguished rather by its solitude, than by utter fruitlessness and desolation.

pretéd, affirm.³ He would then chiefly think of His coming work in the prophetic ministry to which He had just been called, and of the character and bearing which He must henceforth assume while, in His human personality, He claimed for Himself that Divine character which He now fully knew belonged to Him. We necessarily speak with difficulty here, and it should be with reverent cautiousness, under the remembrance that there was no ‘confusion’ of the Divine and human ‘substances’ which were united together in that visible Person which was familiar to mankind. We may say, however, that in His human consciousness—apart from the Divine, awful, solemnizing, and yet strengthening, quickening thoughts, which settled down afterwards into an undisturbed serenity—filled His spirit during those many days of His seclusion, which was at length ended by the manifestation, on an heroic scale and in three great typical forms, of that resistance to evil which, for nearly thirty years, had been maintained by Him.

³ The word used by St. Matthew (*νηστεύσας*) does not imply an unbroken abstinence from food; nor, indeed, is this necessarily conveyed by St. Luke’s statement that, ‘in those days He did eat nothing.’ For of John the Baptist Christ declared that ‘he came neither eating nor drinking,’ while yet it is also said that his ‘meat was locusts and wild honey.’ It would seem that such an abstinence as we commonly denote by the word ‘fasting’ was intended in this instance. On the other hand, when we remember for how long a time devotees and thinkers, and persons under high excitement, have wholly abstained from food—we need find no difficulty if we take the ‘fasting’ of Christ in the strictest sense of the expression.

In what form, or method, the Tempter appeared on this occasion when he gathered up all the assaults upon His trust in God which had beset Him during preceding years—we are not informed.⁴ This, however, is certain, that it was in an objective and personal shape that His adversary came forward in this great endeavour to assail and enfeeble the principles which had hitherto governed His existence, in every part of it. Not in any ideal or dreamy conflict, but in an actual strife of spirit with spirit, was Jesus beset in that assault which was meant to shake His loyalty to the Divine Will, and which began when the Tempter came, addressing Him, in His exhaustion and feebleness, with the suggestion, ‘Command that these stones be made bread.’

In His circumstances at that time, it was as if the

⁴ ‘We must,’ says Archbishop Whately, ‘regard the narrative of the Temptation—not as a figure of speech, or a parable representing Satan as a personal agent, while, in reality, no such being had any part in the transaction, but—as a real and actual occurrence. On the other hand, we should remember that the Evangelists do not even inform us whether the Tempter appeared to our Lord in a bodily form at all, or merely suggested thoughts in His mind. If he did appear in person, it was doubtless not in his own person, or in any frightful and revolting form as he has been often pictured, but disguised.’ Milton (*Paradise Regained*) represents him as coming, in the first of the three assaults, in the likeness of an aged peasant. And some commentators have imagined that it was in the guise of a Jewish priest that he took our Lord into the Temple. Doubtless in the manner, as well as matter, of His trial, He was ‘tempted like as we are;’ and, as we must always do, He recognized the tempter by the temptation, not, according to the representations above referred to, the temptation by the tempter.

assailant of His faithfulness had said,—‘ Supposing Thy new convictions are well founded, and that the Voice was, indeed, true which was uttered from heaven in Thy Baptism—though, indeed, Thy circumstances of need and abandonment here in this dreary wilderness, cast great doubt upon the fact—but, supposing it was from God, then, use Thy Divine power in procuring nourishment. Otherwise Thou wilt certainly perish, faint and languid as Thou art. Exhaustion has overtaken Thee, and death is near. And surely Thou mayest employ the powers which, as the Son of God, are Thine, in order to rescue Thyself from this extreme and imminent distress. If this employment be unlawful in ordinary circumstances, yet Thy circumstances in this hour will justify it. Or, if Thou wilt not work this miracle for Thine own needs, at all events let me witness it, that Thy pretensions may be confirmed. Thy claims will be thus acknowledged, and Thou Thyself wilt be glorified by means of those faculties which Thou believest have been conferred on Thee.’

Often before had He heard this suggestion, though it had never been presented to His human spirit so speciously, and under circumstances which gave it such almost overwhelming power. In the monotonous and dreary toil, in the weariness and humiliation, of His daily work through those long years of His seclusion, how frequently had the temptation, often doubtless presented by

well-meaning friends, been heard—‘Relieve Thyself, at once, from these wearisome, depressing labours. Obtain subsistence by an easier method, while Thou claimest Thy rightful place among the Rabbis and Statesmen who must acknowledge that Thou possessest gifts far superior to any which they are exercising.’ In various forms the suggestion had been often heard; but it had always been put aside. In the midst of His humble companions, He had ever ‘refrained His spirit, and kept it low.’ ‘Mine hour is not yet come,’ was His answer to those who would have drawn Him out of that sequestered scene, and who wondered so greatly at the constraint which He laid upon powers that might have won for Him high distinction among the great movements which were then going forward in the world. In this manner He had gained strength for an heroic conquest over His assailant in that first temptation. He had gained it during the years through which He had lovingly discharged the duties, and submitted to the restraints and trials, of the earlier stages of man’s existence, and had thus shown how genuine spiritual perfection is to be sought for and attained.

Through the severe discipline to which He had submitted in Nazareth, He was now enabled to reply, ‘Man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God.’ As if He had said, ‘I have assumed this human position of

dependence; all my faculties as a man, and even my very life, are being now supported by His power Who is ruling the Order in which I am here living, and Who has made all its instruments subservient to the fulfilment of His will, and the advancement of moral natures which are sharing His existence. The true, the only right and proper use of these agencies, is to accomplish His design. Now, my powers have been given to me by Him for my brethren's advantage, not for my own glory, as the Son of Man. They have been given that, in "doing the will of Him who sent me," I might show forth His glory, and communicate blessings to those whose nature I have assumed. So that in taking the course which thou art commending, I should be sacrificing the object, for the sake of preserving the instruments, of my existence. And that object, the final cause for which they have all been given, is not a pleasurable consciousness, or even freedom from suffering, but that "men might become the children of the Highest"; that they might be changed into the Image of The Son "from one degree of glory to another by The Spirit of the Lord."'⁵

⁵ As we have above intimated, the essence of the first temptation consisted in suggesting Christ's employment of powers that were bestowed for the welfare of mankind, in securing for Himself private and personal advantage. But Lange speaks as if it may also have contained an 'invitation to that false glorification of the world through which, oftentimes, by popular delusion, by robbery,

This first temptation had gathered up into itself all which had come through His previous years in an individualizing guise, alluring Him to self-indulgence and personal advancement. But now another was presented which related to the work on which the Adversary knew His mind was set for the advancement and welfare of mankind.

This also was presented from without, in an actual and objective form. He was taken—some have conjectured by one in priestly guise—into the Temple. There, as He stood upon a corner of the lofty parapet which encompassed its roof, His gaze was directed to the crowds below which filled the cloisters of the Temple and its open courts. He knew them well, for He had been often there from that memorable day when He was

by the subversion of social order, by enormous loans, and deception of all kinds, the deserts are made glad and the stones are turned into bread. . . . We detect traces of this sorcery in the Chiliastic Zion of the Munster Anabaptists, in Wallenstein's camp, as in many other historical caricatures of the world's transformation. For still the Tempter sings this old song, and his magic tones are just now sounding again through the world with a marvellous power of delusion. Christ, therefore, in virtue of that great sympathy with which, as Prince of men, He felt the pulse of Humanity, heard in the address of the Tempter these voices, with the lamentations of all false mendicity, the fawning petition of all Chiliast worldlings, the extravagant requirements of hypocritical and superficial philanthropists, all exclaiming, "O, command that these stones be made bread." Thus He was tempted to create an abundance by the powers of His divine-human life, in contravention of God's order, and by a self-willed and magical endeavour.—'Life of Christ,' E. T. vol. ii.

twelve years old, and He was not only quite familiar with the place, but also with the characters of the men by whom it was frequented. Priests and worshippers, Pharisees and Sadducees and Scribes—they were all ‘open and manifest’ before Him. He knew that large numbers of them were proud, disputatious, self-exalting men; some going through their round of duties as bare and empty forms; some using them as the means of their ambition and aggrandizement; some dwelling upon them as subjects of merely intellectual contention; that there was a larger number still who were altogether careless about their purposes, fulfilling them as a duty of their existence, troublesome, but yet necessary, because prescribed. All these were there. And others too might have been discerned, not many indeed, but yet some must have met His gaze, who were earnest in the service which they rendered, and were seeking by its means to draw nearer to God, and live in closer conformity with His commands. Men and women who in this spirit ‘waited for the consolation of Israel,’ were to be found among those multitudes. And them, too, Christ beheld, as He looked down from His lofty position on the temple roof. The entire company, and the true character of all its members, were manifest before Him. From thence, also, He could discern the streets of the city, and its crowded habitations, as they lay around the sacred edifice, and far beyond it. Everything good and evil

which was then existing in Jerusalem, was presented to His view, and He was looking—as we may imagine He would look—upon the spectacle, when the Voice came to Him, ‘Cast Thyself down from hence.’

It was saying in other words—‘Enter at once upon Thy work! Present Thyself “suddenly” as the prophet declared the “Messiah, the messenger of the Covenant whom they delighted in”—would come.’⁶ Then at once those worshippers will acknowledge Thee, as the Lord for whom they are seeking, and they will hail Thy arrival as the pledge of their deliverance. So present Thyself to those assembled crowds, and the act will immediately secure for Thee the homage of the whole Israelitish nation. Recognized as the Son of David whom the Prophets have foretold, Thou wilt then pass instantly, as an acknowledged King, on to Thine ancestral throne.’

⁶ This expectation, resting on the announcement of the prophet Malachi, that the Messiah would ‘come suddenly to His Temple,’ was the secret hope which afterwards supported the Jewish people in their struggle with the armies which ‘encompassed their city.’ They believed, and many died in the belief, that the siege of Jerusalem was the very crisis of their deliverance. ‘While the Romans suspended the assault, they were listening for the rush of their Redeemer’s chariot-wheels, for the tramp of the angel legions which they believed He would send for their rescue and security. They would have said that, at any hour, He might be expected to appear. Had He not appointed His advent at this very crisis, and was it not worth even all this strife and suffering, to hold His chosen seat and His future throne until He came?’—*Scripture Lands, &c.*, chap. ix.

This prospect, which, by a single movement, He could have thus immediately realized, was indeed most splendid and alluring. When He compared it with the toil, the shame and suffering, of which already He had sad forebodings, it presented a temptation of almost overwhelming strength. And, besides its power, in this view, as an appeal to those feelings of His human nature, which appear in His after prayer, that ‘If it were possible the cup might pass away’—there were other reasons that might have suggested themselves to strengthen it. For as He there beheld the degenerate condition of His people, their selfishness and insincerity, the tempter might have further whispered—‘In what more effective method can Thy countrymen be restored to the position which they have so shamefully abandoned ; can those proud men be humbled, those formalists be made sincere, and those who are really pious and earnest be established in their ways? By this means much good may be at once and certainly effected, while its accomplishment by the long and toilsome course which Thou hast in prospect, is, in any case, doubtful, and must at all events be long deferred. Cast Thyself down amongst them now, and Thy work as the Redeemer of Israel will be directly and certainly fulfilled.’

With this Voice, with suggestions of this kind, we may imagine the temptation to have been urged most obtrusively upon Christ’s human spirit, while the other

utterance which called Him to spare Himself, and escape the weary path which lay before Him, would rather be insinuated in order to strengthen the more plausible solicitation. Then Scripture falsely, because partially, brought forward—was used to strengthen this assault, and the promise of the Psalmist was suggested as an assurance that, in any case, He would be safe, as one whom God had chosen and distinguished. It was said, ‘ “ He will give His angels charge over Thee to keep Thee,” if Thou shouldest take the course which I am commending.’

How often had the same thought, backed by the same sophistry, come to Him, in different shapes, during the long years of His seclusion. For then, too, every pretext which was fitted to call Him off from His quiet toil in his family and neighbourhood, pressed itself on His attention. Throughout those drearily protracted years, all the evils with which afterwards, when ‘ His hour ’ had come, He so valiantly contended—were, as we have already seen, before Him, and around Him, ‘ provoking indignation, crying aloud for interference. The hollowness of social life, the misinterpretation of Scripture, forms of worship and of phraseology which were hiding truth, injustice, priestcraft, cowardice, hypocrisy,’ every mischief which appeared to justify His hasty departure from His own appointed path of duty that He might enter upon some more hopeful method

of doing good—appeared to cry aloud for His protest and resistance. Yet He never listened to those plausible but misleading invitations. He went forward steadfastly under the guidance which was directing Him. Surely His desire was as earnest throughout those earlier years as it ever was afterwards for the promotion of man's welfare, and He was then as impatient as He ever felt, with the evils that were hindering it. Yet He waited and worked on in His appointed sphere until 'His hour' had come; until God called Him to that public toil and conflict upon which Satan now suggested He should suddenly enter simply at the promptings of impatience.

Thus was He enabled to resist the Tempter, and upon the principle which is suggested by those very words, 'In all thy ways,' which were omitted by the Evil One in his professed quotation from the Scriptures. His silence respecting the perversion of the Psalmist's language, showed, more significantly than any rebuke could have done, His indignation at the artifice. While the same words suggested the completion of His answer to the Adversary. For the precept, 'Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God,' stands at the beginning of a passage which continues thus—'But ye shall diligently keep the commandments of the Lord, and His statutes which He has commanded. And thou shall do that which is right and good in His sight, that it may be well with thee, and thou shalt go in and possess the good land which

He hath given thee.' It was upon this principle that He had always been habitually acting. He had practically acknowledged that God prescribes in this very way the method and instruments, as well as the objects, of our exertions, and that even in subordinating outward things to moral ends, and using them as helps in the fulfilment of a Divine purpose, men must observe an appointed order and prescribed rules. Even when they are sincerely fulfilling that Will of which they acknowledge the supremacy, they must renounce their own devices and desires, and submit to the influences which have been appointed to urge them forward in the path of their obedience.

Thus was the temptation to adopt unlawful methods in the accomplishment of duty, to 'do evil that good may come'—successfully resisted. But it was soon followed by another, which gathered into itself the essence of almost every bad solicitation. And this also came in no ideal strife. It was truly objective, so that, however the vision may have been produced upon that pictured surface with which the mind converses, He saw, distinctly and 'in a moment of time, all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them.'

He saw them in all their pomp and splendour. He beheld 'Towers and temples proudly elevate, Porches and theatres, . . Statues and trophies, and triumphal arcs,

Gardens and groves. . . The imperial palace, compass huge, and high the structure. . . With gilded battlements conspicuous far, Turrets and terraces and glittering spires.' Thence He would cast His eye to the City gates, and see the 'conflux issuing forth, or entering in. Prætors, pro-consuls to their provinces hasting, Or on return, in robes of state. . . Legions and cohorts . . . With embassies from regions far remote.'⁷ All this and more was present to His mind in that 'moment of time,' and was distinctly seen by Him. Yes, and He also looked beneath those forms of splendour, those painted shows and vestures of magnificence. He saw the secret agencies which they concealed. He knew their meaning, and explored the hidden mysteries that were working in the midst of them. What that emperor was meditating, and what the schemes of those statesmen were; for what purposes those armies were maintained, and whose pleasures those means of luxuries subserved—all this He saw. He beheld the wrong and wickedness which that pomp concealed from human eyes; the deeds of cruel injustice, and shameful infamy which had obtained for some of

⁷ We take Milton's representation of imperial Rome as a specimen of the 'kingdoms of the world and the glory of them,' which the tempter set before Him. St. Luke adds, 'in a moment of time (*ἐν στιγμή χρόνου*),' and this statement, with the mention of an 'exceeding high mountain' (cp. Rev. xxi. 10, 'He carried me away to a great and high mountain'), seems to imply that no bodily movement is spoken of, but that, by some other means, the vision was pictured on the surface with which the mind holds converse.

those titled men the places they were occupying. How worthless were their characters! How unscrupulous the means they had employed! And yet, how successful they had been! He knew, too, the worth which had been trampled down by their violence and their intrigues. In fine He saw all and more than any man could now see if he should, in one wide and piercing glance, look into what, upon the outside, is most plausible and imposing amongst ourselves. And it was with far deeper insight than is possible to men, that He looked upon a worse, if it was also a more splendid, scene than any of the 'kingdoms of the world' at this time could furnish. How naturally, then, and how plausibly, while He was so looking, did the words come—'All these things, this power and this glory, have been delivered unto me. These are my kingdoms. I rule here supreme, and to whomsoever I will, I give them. If Thou wilt fall down before me, all shall be Thine.'

It was as if the Adversary had said, 'Thou seest how widespread, nay how universal, injustice and profligacy are in even the most illustrious positions of the earth! Thou beholdest, too, how successful and how glorious my adherents have become! The highest places are most often reached by them! And surely this could only be because these territories have been delivered unto me, and because in them there is no power higher than that which is exerted by myself.' The essence of this temp-

tation was to deny the supremacy of God in all regions of the earth, and to acknowledge that one who is only a usurper, has become ruler, in the midst of it. This was the first and chief part of His trial; and the second naturally followed. For, after assuming in this manner that he had the right to dispose of all earthly power, the Tempter next promised that he would bestow it upon Christ, if He would render him submission. ‘All this power and glory will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me. I know Thou hast a great work to accomplish on earth. Whether Thou Thyself art the Messiah, or only one of His heralds and forerunners, Thou hast doubtless come on an important mission, and with benignant purposes towards mankind. But now Thou seest in what way alone those purposes can be fulfilled. The conditions are manifest by which only Thou canst attain the power and influence which they will require Thee to exercise. Whatever may be the case elsewhere, Thou must acknowledge that upon earth I am supreme. Thou must therefore submit to me, and adopt the maxims of my followers, if Thou wilt succeed in Thy endeavours. And now, if Thou wilt make this acknowledgment, and render me submission, all these resources of human power and wealth, these vast and mighty agencies for the execution of Thy purposes, shall be at Thy disposal! If Thou wilt only fall down and worship me, all shall be Thine!’

And thus looking on either side of the spectacle before Him, on the years which preceded it, and on the years also which would follow—He saw that it did not contradict, but that it justified, the righteousness of God. When the course of those very men, whose splendid successes seemed to prove that Satan was the ruler of the world, was looked at comprehensively, from its beginning and on into the future through which it passed—it was in fact nothing else but a manifestation of God's supremacy, and of the irresistible power of His laws. Thus, indeed, had Christ habitually enlarged His view and contemplation, and it was by doing so on this occasion, that He disarmed the Tempter, for then He saw written everywhere in characters that were illumined in heaven's own light, 'God alone is to be worshipped! Him only shalt thou serve!'

But, besides this enlargement of His vision in respect of time, in space also it was similarly widened. He looked at the 'kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them' in connexion with those far wider regions of the Divine Government throughout which, as He well knew, the will of God was at that very time being faithfully accomplished. And we know how inconsiderable the rebellious province must have seemed to Him in comparison with those immeasurable spaces where no usurpation has been ever witnessed. How insignificant did its disloyal occupants appear in comparison with the illus-

trious beings who have ever accounted it their highest honour to be obedient to God! As reasonably might men have concluded that the monarch of that vast Roman Empire had ceased to rule, because they saw the banners of treason unfurled in some small village in his realm, as conclude that God had surrendered the government of earth to the Evil Spirit, when all around this lowly scene, innumerable, and far more glorious, worlds are abiding firm in their allegiance. On them Christ looked, and it was in connexion with them that He beheld the spectacle before Him. This had ever been His habit of meditation. And therefore He was utterly unmoved by the offer of the Tempter. Calmly and confidently He answered, ‘“It is written”’—the inscription may be read, everywhere, yea far beyond the ken of mortal sight—“Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.”’

Thus, in what may well be called an heroic manifestation, He brought into full clear view the perfection of that character which had been forming during His earlier life, and declared the principles which had always ruled His acts and His perceptions. As in a second Adam, human nature in its aboriginal integrity was perfectly beheld in Him. And accordingly He was now openly recognized by those loyal spirits who, in deepest blessedness are ever encircling the Eternal Throne, just

as they had held intercourse with the first man while he abode with them in his innocence.

They 'came and ministered to Him.' His human nature entered into that communion for which it was originally destined.³ And from that hour He was never unconscious of their nearness. Heaven was always opened henceforth to His gaze and contemplation; and as Man He entered into that perfect communion with its occupants, wherein we shall see Him abiding to the end.

³ Reasons have been given for the belief that the beings whom we designate as 'angels and archangels' are distinguished by the characteristics of our mind and moral nature, and even by the features of our persons, and that they are, moreover, pursuing their destinies under conditions similar to those which have been imposed upon ourselves. This conclusion is sustained, and it is also developed by every account of their appearance and ministry amongst mankind. We see them taking part in man's affairs as if they were conscious of his thoughts and feelings, and familiar with his modes of life, and were capable of entering with genuine and deep sympathy into all those circumstances of humanity which have not been spoiled by his transgression. They come amongst us just as members of neighbouring communities, living in similar but far purer and loftier circumstances of life, might have been expected to come, and they bestow their help, as the elder and nobler members of a race would naturally bestow it upon those who are younger, and in an inferior position. On every occasion, they seem to be well informed in respect of all that was going forward, fully aware of the character of each emergency, cognizant of the nature of human resources and of the uses which might be made of them. In one word, they show a brotherly interest in men's affairs, and they show it in a manner which plainly betokens that, in all essential respects, the circumstances of their homes are like those of earth, and that the course of their history has included events similar to those by which our course has been distinguished.—'Divine Kingdom, &c.,' Appendix, Notes A. and C.

The conflict which He thenceforth carried forward in His human character, was symbolized by the Apocalyptic vision which represents the armies in heaven who are living before the throne of God, as being fully conscious of its splendour and its might, while yet they are always thence going forth into the regions of darkness and misrule by which they are surrounded. So He met afterwards every temptation which indeed was virtually vanquished on that occasion. Every suggestion which in His later course Satan set before Christ's mind, when men flattered, or when they 'spitefully entreated' Him, was simply the renewal of those which, at this difficult period, He had driven away and victoriously repelled. And on all His after-course we see the light of that perfectness unto which His days had been 'shining more and more,' all through His previous career.

In the midst of that light, and henceforth perfectly conscious of the indwelling and unison with Him of the Eternal Word, He went forward to the accomplishment of the work to which He had been called. Therein we shall now follow Him, looking, next in order, to His discharge of the Prophetic part of His commission.

CHAPTER II.

PROPHETIC MINISTRY.

THE prophetic office had, indeed, already been fulfilled by Him. For every one who lives out the appointed Order of existence, through its several departments, as He had done, is witnessing to those around him what the constitution of that Order is, and what are its requirements. But, in the simplest conception of it, this is the Prophet's work, the mission to which the man who truly bears that designation has been called.

He has a vivid and intimate perception of the inner meaning, the original idea and purpose of all the things, significantly called the 'circumstances' of men, by which he is surrounded. Looking through the form and vesture in which the mind of God has been disclosed, the prophet lives in an habitual study and contemplation of His thoughts, His purposes and will. Moreover, along with his deep perceptions of truth, he is distinguished by zealous devotedness and steadfast intrepidity, and these qualities prompt him to communicate what he has seen to all

whom he can induce, or even compel, to heed his words.¹ Work of this kind must be fulfilled by every loyal servant of God from the very nature of his position. Some there are, however, who, being signally gifted, and having faithfully cultivated their endowments, have been called forth prominently in this character. Such are the 'elders' and the 'living ones,' and the ever-burning spirits whom the Apostle saw when the Divine Kingdom was unveiled to him. And such also have been the heroic guides and teachers of our race, the 'holy prophets which have been since the world began.' Whenever they have appeared in an authentic character, it has been after passing through severe discipline, and when they have been called by a special designation. Now in Jesus we behold the typical representative of the members of this 'goodly fellowship, every one of their qualifications appearing in Him more clearly the more closely we examine His life before He stepped forward from the narrower scenes of His activity

¹ 'The prophet,' says Ewald, 'has a true sense of having a special charge, mission and errand, from his God straightway to proclaim, in spite of all hindrances, and at the right place, the words of that Higher Voice which he can no longer hide and repress within himself. He acts and speaks not for himself, a Higher moves him, —his God—Whom it is sin to strive against, who is also the God of those to whom he has to speak. And they, in their turn, readily feel that their God is living. In his words they hear what they sought, and had not found, and in him who thus makes clear to them that of which they had been so long in quest, they recognize, as by a secret instinct the proclaimer and interpreter of his and their God, the mediator between them and God.'

to that larger sphere where He has claimed, and won the attention of mankind. When He then passed into His wider field of action as a prophet, He was therefore still fulfilling the Divine Order of man's life. And, just as He had done in other scenes, so did He here perfectly accomplish every one of the requirements of the office as no other bearer of it had ever done.

For, unlike all others, His insight into the Divine Constitution was perfect, and this, in virtue both of the force and clearness of His reason, and the devout and loyal subjection of His will. Even in childhood His 'understanding and answers' betokened the highest qualities of intellect; and that they were sedulously cultivated is certain from that increasing wisdom which is ascribed to Him, while 'He acquired, by the slow labour of observation, a mastery over truths which He already in another sense possessed.'² Nor was the balance of His intellect ever disturbed or its powers enervated, its tranquil surface was never ruffled, by any of the causes which dim the clearness of man's intellectual vision. Being 'pure in heart,' He 'saw God' in every one of the Divine disclosures. His 'judgment was just, because He sought not His own will.' Being always 'willing to do God's will,' the true 'doctrine was made known to Him.' Indeed, every law which connects intellectual insight with moral perfectness, was typically exemplified in His experience. And

² Liddon, *ubi supra*.

this was so varied, His circumstances were so ordered, that an opportunity was furnished for His complete manifestation of human existence in every sphere of its development. What man was made and meant to be was so perfectly reflected in His course and character, that from them the Divine purposes might have been inferred where they had not been previously known, and where any knowledge of them was still extant, they were by this means set forth in amplest fulness, and with an infallible authentication. In other words, not only did He declare, but He was Himself the Truth: the Divine scheme and pattern of existence was perfectly embodied in His Person. 'In Me,' He might have said, 'you see God, and you also see the constitution of His kingdom.' Thus, in all His prophetic utterances, He preached Himself, as not one of the prophets who had gone before Him, had, or could have, done.³

In our survey of His ministrations this must be borne

³ This view of Christ as embodying in His life and thus reflecting and setting forth the very truth of existence, so that He was ἡ ἀλήθεια (ἀλήθεια, opposed, not to ψεῦδος, but to σκιά or ὑπόδειγμα), appears in such passages as those which speak of His coming 'full of Grace and Truth' into our world, and of His making known the 'manifold wisdom of God according to the changeless designs which He had purposed' from the beginning. It was further affirmed in the declarations wherein He spoke of Himself as the True Light, the True Bread, the True Vine—ἀληθινός, in all such cases, meaning that which perfectly fulfils its own idea, as compared with all partial realizations of the same. In this sense it may be said that Christ is Christianity.—Cp. 'Divine Kingdom, &c.' p. 182.

in mind, whether we hear Him speak in solemn affirmation of truth, or in protest against man's partial and false views respecting it. Indeed, many of the precepts and declarations which He delivered in His prophetic character cannot be interpreted without thus referring to His life, and the same reference has in every instance the effect of deepening the impressiveness of His teaching. Bearing this in mind, we proceed now to view its subjects, in the order of their importance.

I. Directing the attention of His hearers, then, first of all, to the larger and more general views of their position—He declared that Creation is the product of a wise and benignant Will, which was deliberately exerted at a certain epoch, and which is continually maintaining that exertion in order to support the system which was then brought into existence. In whatever part of His course we observe Him, and wherever we listen to His words, we find Him uttering a decided protest against all views of the Universe which describe it as self-existent from eternity, or which speak of its mechanical development by the working of mere law, or again of its ideal existence as an illusion of the mind, having no external reality that corresponds with the conceptions that are formed of it. As if He had anticipated all such theories, and framed His conduct and His language with respect to them, we find Him constantly

recognizing God as His Father, and emphatically declaring His constant working in, and His minute care and watchfulness over, man's affairs, so that the 'hairs of our heads are numbered,' and not a sparrow falls without His permission to the ground.

How explicitly and emphatically He spoke to this effect is familiar to every reader of the Gospels. But whenever we therein join His 'disciples and the multitude,' and listen with them to His utterances, we must also recollect what the men who heard these statements from His lips, had observed in Him, and how many unrecorded utterances of the same kind He was constantly repeating in the hearing of His followers. We must think of what He was, and what He did, as well as of what He habitually said; or else the words which in His public ministry He repeatedly spoke on this great theme, are inadequately appreciated, if they are not misunderstood. Remembering how He had fulfilled all human duties, we can measure the impressiveness of His testimony against all mechanical, or idealizing, or pantheistic notions about the world's origin, and its progress and control. Always and everywhere, we have seen Him cheerful and earnest, diligent in His labours among men and kindly in His intercourse with them, just as one naturally would be who was ever conscious of a Father's presence, and assured that a Loving Will is supremely ruling men's affairs. We know how tender and sensitive He

was ; and we therefore know, that if He had regarded Himself as helplessly enclosed within the framework of a vast machine, or believed that He was living amidst mere illusions, He must have sometimes betrayed indifference, or sullenness, or mere resentment at His fate. In His domestic intercourse, or neighbourly relations, or in His position as a citizen, these feelings would then have surely betrayed themselves. But we see in Him nothing of the kind. In His loving discharge of all family duties, in His fidelity and kindness while fulfilling every neighbourly requirement, in His concern for the welfare and honour of His country—the ever-watchful care of God as His Father was made known by His constant recognition. While still more clearly, the same witness was rendered by those acts of worship which He celebrated, ‘in spirit and in truth,’ from the dawning of His consciousness. With full intention of meaning, He repeated all those utterances of the psalmist and of the prophets which so explicitly recognize God as a Living Person, creation as the product of His hands, and the course of nature as the result of his constant working and control. He said, ‘Thou formedst the earth and the world. Thou hast prepared the light and the sun. Thou tellest the number of the stars, and art looking to the end of the earth and seeing under the whole heaven.’ . . . ‘Thou art rejoicing in the habitable part of the earth, and Thy delights are with the sons of men.’

Remembering that these and like utterances were often on His lips, immense significance is given to what we may call His prophetic declarations of a thoughtful, loving, fatherly control of our affairs which He so impressively gathered up in the first words of that prayer, 'after the manner' of which all our devotions should be framed. And the same truth was declared by His miraculous achievements, through and by means of which His prophetic ministry was also carried forward.

When they are viewed in connexion with each other they are seen to contemplate with a comprehensiveness which is itself miraculous, all things, visible and invisible, with which man is connected, and in which he is concerned. They show the hand of power working in every region that lies open to our mind, controlling and modifying the nature and action of its products just as we ourselves work upon and amidst the natural processes which are constantly going forward.⁴ In this manner they bring out the primary message of the Revealing Word with an emphasis which cannot be

⁴ Assuming the truthfulness of the Evangelists in their report of Christ's miracles, an internal evidence is furnished in the comprehensiveness of His mighty works, by which the assumption is justified. For they take in with a completeness which is itself a 'note of truth,' all things visible and invisible with which man is connected, and in which he is concerned. Unknown to their reporters they group themselves in this all-comprehending order, and, while thus bearing witness to their own reality, they show, with the significance above described, the working of a Personal Will in every region of existence.

resisted. And they contradict for ever the theories which speak of necessary evolution, and ideal phantasms, or which would pantheistically absorb God in the creatures of His hand.

II. Then, again, He always spoke of the universe which has been thus originated, and which is thus controlled, as having been organized into a system. And He declared that in this system every being has a place which is in the most emphatic sense his own, being that in which he is fulfilling duties for the common welfare, while, in that place and by the same works, his own advancement may be secured, and he may share the Divine felicity in degrees which are constantly augmenting.

In His constant reference to His Father in Heaven and His allusions to those ministrations, from the far outspreading region that surrounds our earth, which are carried forward in the midst of us—He declared man's citizenship of the universe, as well as of this sphere of it. He always spoke, as He had habitually lived, as if His human life had brought Him as one of a reconciled family and race into the Kingdom of God; and He declared that it is ruled throughout by unchangeable laws which, as they take effect on earth, are in principle the very same with those which prevail in the highest communities now existing in the universe, and

which are obeyed by the noblest occupants of the most exalted worlds. Thus He spake of the 'many mansions' of His Father's house,' of the 'ninety and nine that went not astray,' of the 'other sheep which were not of this fold,' of the 'legions of angels' who might have come forth for His rescue and protection. In these and other ways, He recognized that order and vastness and antiquity of the material platform of our immortal progress, which science has made so definite. The amazing enlargement which modern astronomy has effected in our views of space, and the no less wonderful disclosures of geology as to the age of the material creation—fall in with His constant declarations.⁵

Moreover, He declared that each man's place in this fixed order is that which has been specially appointed for his movements. He constantly taught His disciples that God has therein made ready for each of us, has prepared and prearranged a sphere of mortal action, a 'road with the intent that we should walk in, and not leave it.' He warned His disciples against permitting selfish impulses, like those which were the origin of the first apostasy, to become predominant, and affirmed that each one should rule his own will by that of the Head and Administrator of the Order in which he is placed, and submit to the influences which impel him forward in the course which has been appointed as his own. This appears in His

⁵ 'Divine Kingdom, &c.' p. 249.

admonitions against worldliness, of which the essence is self-will, as well as in His constant allusions to 'ministry' and 'service,' when He is describing the loyal and zealous subjects of His kingdom. In designating each man's labours as 'his work,' He conveyed the lesson of which we are now speaking. And it was again emphatically set forth in His parting declaration to His followers when He said to them, "As my Father hath sent Me," with My special tasks and My appointed burdens, "into this world, even so do I send you," that, after My example, you also may there fulfil the work which has been given you to do.⁶

These maxims as to the seriousness of our life's work and its appointments were enforced by the solemn wistfulness which thoughtful men observed in Him as He gazed into the regions through which our world is moving.⁷ They were enforced also by His habitual and

⁶ *Supra*, Part I., chap. iii.

⁷ If He looked wistfully into the depths through which human existence is carried forward, let it be observed that He also looked serenely. And yet He was evidently conscious of all the mysteriousness which is so painfully suggested when we think of the wider relations of our system. He looked into its darkness farther, and more widely, than we can look, and with the future, as well as the past and present in His view. All and far more than any men can see of the mysteries which trouble them, was seen by Him. Moreover, not His words only, His sighs, His tears, assure us that He is not indifferent to the anguish which He looks upon. And yet He calmly, sorrowfully affirms that 'all is well.' Why, then, may not His serenity be shared in by ourselves? 'It is certain,' said one of the wisest thinkers of our age, 'that He who knows, and has in His view all that I see and know, and far more, and whose emotions of pity are like my own,

high-minded diligence, and by the respect which He showed towards all with whom He had intercourse, as well as in the enforcement of the same respect on the part of His disciples. On no occasion do we discern anything like that cynical and contemptuous levity which may be looked for in those who are under the impression that man is occupying a low position in the scale of being, or that he has come into existence as the random product of forces that are working chaotically around his dwelling-place. In Christ's individual conduct, and in His discharge of all household and national relationships, we observe a demeanour which is perfectly incongruous with any view of the Universe, except that which regards its parts as working together in a vast organism, and as embodying laws through which every inheritor of existence may rise to the loftiest heights, and become secure and blest in his position.

And the same view of our place and destiny was always manifested in His acts of worship. Where are the amazing disclosures of modern science expressed

save that they are deeper and more constant—has also in His view such facts, or such prospects, as are more than sufficient for the double purpose, first, of securing an habitual composure and tranquillity, and also for holding entire an unshaken loyalty towards God. . . . If, therefore, I cannot rid myself of this burden of mystery, I have yet found in the Gospels Him in communion with whom I am learning how to bear it. And thus I hope to bear it to the end, still retaining my trust in God as supremely good and wise a "just God and a Saviour."—Cp. '*Reasons of Faith, &c.*' chap. vii.

more forcibly than in the Old Testament, especially in many passages from the Psalms and Prophets which were often on His lips? Those heavenly bodies, which so dwarf man and his abode that the Psalmist marvelled at the Divine regard to him, and then the innumerable spirits, the mighty armies, dwelling in them, who are ever ministering before God, 'doing His commandments while they hearken to the voice of His word, whereof He spake so frequently—perfectly accord with the largest conceptions of space and time which science has suggested. And still more remarkably is this aspect of Creation represented in the Book of Proverbs, which He constantly employed. There the most comprehensive are connected with the most limited and even local views of our existence. All the maxims which are there uttered by the inspired writer for the ordering of every human path as it goes forward among the circumstances, the duties and relationships of time—are presented as lessons from the whole scheme of being⁸ which embraces all ages and worlds from the beginning. Now what less can be said of such language when it proceeded from His lips, than that it was an unveiling of those abysmal heights and depths in which our world

⁸ Proverbs, chap. viii. More frequently than any other book of the Old Testament, the Book of Proverbs is quoted in the New, in the Gospels and in the Epistles. This fact appears to justify the above statement of our Lord's familiarity with the book, and His habitual employment of its maxims.

is placed, and of the momentous histories, implicated with our own, that are going forward in the midst of them.

Moreover, as He habitually brought forward these facts in His ordinary intercourse and teaching, we also get some glimpses of them in the miracles through which He produced the most amazing results without disturbing the nearer processes of creation, and thus showed that He was ruling causes that are far beyond man's ken or apprehension. When He wrought amongst the causes of famine and disease, when He summoned spirits from the abode of the departed, and confronted the legion hosts which had gathered round the victims of possession—He disclosed that same vastness of the Divine Kingdom and close intertwining of its processes, along with the momentousness of its fortunes and events, of which we are now thinking. In accomplishing those works, He stood in the attitude of one who uttered His commands in regions which are far distant from, though they are most closely connected with, our earth and its affairs.⁹

III. We may name as the third subject of His prophetic teaching, His constant insistence on the fact, that the circumstances by which man is surrounded constitute an instrumentality for the development of moral natures

⁹ *Supra*, p. 141.

in the likeness and blessedness of their Creator, and that they should constantly be made subordinate to the fulfilment of that end.

This high conception habitually ruled Him from the beginning of His course; and in His earliest years He anticipated His latest and most important words upon the subject. This appears from those questionings, on the occasion of His first visit to the Temple, which naturally astonished men who had lost sight of the objects of life in its mere instruments. That His inquiries then turned on nothing less than the ends of man's existence, is apparent from the declaration which immediately followed. "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business," that I must accomplish His design respecting Myself, which also is His design respecting the beings whose nature I am sharing?" He would always have described this purpose of God in the language which He afterwards employed, and have said that it contemplated men 'becoming the children of the Highest';¹ that, for this end, 'power had been bestowed

¹ The sense of the word 'becoming,' in the above passage, is well explained in the statement that 'as we were made men by our natural birth, whereby we obtained the nature and capacities of manhood, we "become" men by natural growth, whereby what is in germ and virtue becomes actual and perfect. . . . As life is natural birth produced, so sonship is the spirit of adoption produced. To be led by spiritual instincts, lights, and inspirations, is to "become," and, therefore, in a very and eternal reality, to be, sons of God.

on them,' and that they were meant to be restored into the 'Divine Image, from one degree of glory to another, by the Spirit of the Lord.' He constantly spoke of man's earthly abode as having been furnished with helps for the attainment of this end; and He emphatically insisted that all the appointments of human existence should be regarded in this character, and that they should be always used in the light, and for the accomplishment, of this great design.

He was inculcating this lesson when He warned men against the 'cares of this life,' and forbade them 'to take anxious thought' about their food and raiment, reminding them of the quiet trust of the 'birds of the air and the lilies of the field.' We can discern it also when He admonished His disciples against the 'world' and 'worldliness'—the chief manifestation of which is slavery to visible and transitory things—as again when He declared the law of stewardship with respect to place, and influence, and wealth. Then too He was in other words saying, 'Think of the ends for which these possessions and endowments were bestowed, and in the light and under the guidance of those ends, faithfully employ them!' In the same view we must regard His maxims about subordinating all personal affections to the love of God. "He that loveth father or mother, son or daughter, more than Me, is not worthy of Me." Supreme regard to and affiance in the Highest, involving the cordial

accomplishment of all His purposes—are essential to the right exercise of all other affections which man is meant to entertain.’ So, likewise, in His parable of the unforgiving servant, and His precepts about the settlement of local strifes, He was teaching the ends for which all the ties of neighbourhood have been appointed, and explaining the principles on which their obligations should be discharged. He always represented these connexions as meant for common development and associated progress, and declared that they should be habitually contemplated in the light of those ends, as expressions of the Divine Mind and Will. In the same view He represented all national constitutions as founded on the Divine Name; speaking of ‘the things of Cæsar,’ in connexion with those which might be claimed by God, of all earthly power, as ‘coming from above,’ and of the sin of those who misused it, as being heightened by that fact. And even more emphatically did He bring out this lesson when He denounced the misdeeds of men who were sitting in the seats of judgment, and who administered their trusts without looking to the ground of their appointment, or thinking of the ends for which their functions were discharged.

Thus, both by rebuke and exhortation, He brought forward the deepest principles, and the largest views of life to bear upon our working of its mere machinery and instruments, in the family and neighbourhood, and

in the state. Interpreting these lessons by His own practice of them, men saw that they were bound to discharge every duty, and administer every trust, in view of the purposes for which existence was bestowed, and that they should thus, in love and loyalty, become fellow-workers with The Supreme.

The same principle was also explicitly declared by His worship in the synagogue, where it was His custom to attend, as well as at the Temple feasts which as the Son of David He habitually celebrated. He addressed His prayers to God as to a Father who dwelt with men, and guided them. 'Thou art my God,' He said. 'Lead me in Thy righteousness. Make Thy way straight before my face.' 'When I wake up I shall be satisfied with Thy likeness.' These, with similar prayers and avowals, were constantly upon His lips, and He accepted and enforced that teaching of the prophets which sets moral attainments as the first and highest, and progress in the paths of righteousness as the end of all secular engagements, and the reason of all ritual observance. He declared the 'fear of God, and the observance of His commandments,' to be man's chief duty, and acknowledged as our first obligation that we should 'do justly and love mercy.' And so again He acknowledged as the fathers and exemplars of His people, men whose activity was summed up in the Old Testament description that they 'walked with God.'

When, at length, He was fully conscious of His union and oneness with the Son, who is the Type and Pattern of all created life, this truth was declared by Him with still more emphasis. The authority of that Pattern, its acknowledgment as the reason of existence, and as the end to which all things are subordinate—had always been declared by His habits, by His exercises of will, by the growth and bent of His affections. It had been habitually shown, too, by the unworldliness which placed Him above all visible things while He was using them. And at length it was emphatically declared by His teaching as well as life, especially by the sublime self-assertion which marked it when He said, ‘I Whom you see living on this principle, Whom you have observed and known, “I am the Life.” In knowledge of, in union with Me, the ends of your existence are fulfilled.’²

But this teaching as to the subordination of all outward things to moral ends, and the necessity of always using them as helps in conforming ourselves to the

² This ‘tremendous self-assertion of Jesus Christ, “I am the Truth,” echoes on from age to age.’ And regarding Him, as the Catholic Church has ever regarded Him, as ‘God and Man in one Person,’ the claim is not only seemly but sublime. On any other supposition it is incongruous, and worse. Indeed, when we remember their acknowledgments of His greatness and excellence, it involves unbelievers in difficulties which are insoluble. The seriousness of these difficulties is well dwelt upon by Canon Liddon in many passages of his ‘Bampton Lectures.’

revealed Pattern of existence, was especially shown in His reference to certain errors respecting holy places and services, which were in His days, as, indeed, they have always been, very widely and mischievously prevalent. We find the chief illustration of His teaching on this subject, in His question to the Pharisees, whom He rebuked as 'blind and foolish,' when He asked them, 'Whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold.' Now the principle of that inquiry was simply and distinctly this—That the sacredness of any institution can only be understood by referring to the reasons of its origin and the ends of its appointment. The nature and the purpose of its employment in God's service, and the grounds on which that employment rests, must be clearly ascertained before we can, rightly and with true reverence, regard any of the parts and details which belong to it. In other words, the wider, the more general and comprehensive, view of the Divine ordinance, must so plainly take precedence of every other view in our regards, that a man may well be called 'blind and foolish,' and he is so manifestly and inexcusably, when he is forgetting or disparaging the main intent of that ordinance, and the fundamental grounds it rests upon, while he professes deep reverence for the things which come out from, or which incidentally belong to it.

So simple and obvious is this truth, that were it not

for our constant experience of the manner in which first principles are neglected, we might have thought there was no need to put it forth in anything like a formal declaration. Yet every one is conscious of an inherent, and sometimes almost irresistible, tendency to use Divine ordinances, apart from this reference to the ends for which they have been given. Just as those Pharisees could not look beyond their offerings to the altar, or to the temple beyond the gold, so, through that same idolatrousness which belongs to human nature, are all men averse or indisposed to take that further onward look, for assisting us in which these institutions have been given. Hence it comes to pass that many come into the holy place, without piercing through the veil to that still holier shrine of which it is the vestibule; they place their sacrifices on the altar, without any thought of that devotion of their hearts and lives of which the act was intended to remind them; they use the mere words of prayer and of thanksgiving, without any sincere desire for the blessings they are asking for, or any feelings of true thankfulness for those which they are constantly receiving. But this is the very 'blindness and folly' which Christ rebuked with such indignation. They are 'vain oblations,' indeed, which such persons are presenting! 'Bring no more of them,' He said. And well might He speak severely to every one who, in such an observance of these ordinances,

forgets the uses and ends of their appointment; since in this way their purifying, strengthening, ennobling purposes are utterly frustrated. Nay, instead of lifting the spirit heavenward, and casting Divine light on it, they send it downwards, and it is darkened and hardened by their means.

By the mere formalist, or we should rather call him an idolator, the Altar and Temple are perverted in this manner. And, under a kindred delusion, they are also 'made of none effect' by the sentimentalist, the man who uses Divine services as the source and agency of luxurious excitement.³ His imagination must be charmed, his sensibilities and his sensuousness must be gratified, whenever he comes into the sanctuary. He

³ 'It is not primarily in the soul, or natural man (*ψυχή*), that true worshippers are to come in their approaches to the Father, but it is "in spirit" (*ἐν πνεύματι*) they must first draw nigh to Him. . . . Forms of worship, therefore, which are first concerned with the "natural" impulses and the imagination, are by that very characteristic of them utterly condemned. The instruments which, in their moving appeals to the eye or ear affect that part of our humanity, should, from the very nature of true worship, be kept in an altogether secondary place. In other words, the sensuous, stimulating influences of religious services must not be those by which, in the first instance, we are to be wrought upon. Or else, while they may indeed produce all manner of commotion in the feelings and imagination, there may not, in the whole course of them, be one true movement of the "inner man" towards God. They may excite awe apart from reverence, and fear without humility, and even tears without remorse. It will be a fictitious devotion which will be offered up by him who celebrates such services, and whom our Lord would not call one of His true worshippers.'—*Church Restoration*, p. 220.

must be entranced with the pomp and circumstance of worship, with brilliant oratory, with ravishing sounds and glittering show. Otherwise his occupations in the House of God are wearisome and tedious. But how great is this delusion ! Well may it be said also to those who are under the power of it, ‘ O foolish men and blind ! Whether is greater, the instruments of worship, or its ends ? But your absorbed concern with its mere instruments, plainly shows that by you its true ends have been neglected. The showy attractions of your surface worship have carried you into a dreamy phantom-land, but it has not taken you into that fellowship of saints which is convened around God’s throne. And that is the reason why we do not see any of the tokens of real saintliness in you, or upon you ; why you are not marked by that noble truthfulness, and unswerving strength, and deep and sympathizing wisdom, and lofty spirituality, by which men who have lived in true communion with God have always been distinguished and illustrious.’

It is in the production of these qualities in our own spirits so that we may be fitted for an abode in that world where every inhabitant is distinguished by possessing them—that we discern the object of all institutions and instruments of worship. And this object is not effected in him who is sentimentally, any more than in him who is only formally, employing them. The cold

dull heartlessness of the one, and the feeble raptures of the other, are proofs of a fundamental error in them both. Our Lord's question to the Scribes and Pharisees warns men against the influence of this error, as well as against its opposite in a thankless irreverent neglect of those appointments with which, for such high ends, we have been blessed.

IV. The fourth subject of His prophetic ministry in respect to which, also, He was proclaiming that which had been already embodied and witnessed in His life, was—That through this thoughtful employment of outward circumstances for the promotion of moral ends, and this loyal conformity to the laws of the Divine Order, comes the experience of peace and blessedness, and this in the midst of outward disturbance, nay even of severe suffering, while an experience of the very opposite character is the result of opposite proceedings.

This lesson was included in His representation of the Universe as having been so perfectly framed and organized, that it might be rightly spoken of as a kingdom which is ruled throughout and everywhere by the 'Lord of Hosts.'⁴ Such a view implies its harmonious accord with the spiritual faculties and capacities

⁴ 'The Lord of Hosts is His name.' The designation graphically sets forth that idea of organization which is above dwelt upon, as though the Universe were a 'camp of living forces in which order and authority are paramount.'

of its inhabitants, so that they may be conscious of the deepest serenity in the midst of strenuous and even painful effort. And this fact is pictured in those visions of the ancient seers which His own acceptance of them, urged with prophetic authority upon His hearers. In the celestial revelations which were vouchsafed to Moses and Micahiah, to Isaiah and to Ezekiel, we see that, in the fullest outflow of the energies of the unfallen, in their most arduous labours, while they are executing the will of God—they are never agitated or disturbed.⁵ Unresting, they are also untroubled and unhasting. Now Christ earnestly declared that men might enjoy that beatific consciousness now and here. He affirmed that they who have not ‘lifted up their soul to vanity, nor sworn deceitfully,’ who have kept themselves clear from the frivolities of the age and its corruptions, may, during this present life, enter into that ‘presence where there is fulness of joy,’ and dwell at God’s right hand, ‘where there are pleasures for evermore.’ He spoke of the present blessedness of those on whom His special benedictions were pronounced. He declared that the meek, and the pure in heart, and those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and others kindred in spirit with them—have already ‘entered into the joy of their Lord,’ and that every subsequent step of their progress, especially when they have been released from their mortal frailties and imperfections,

⁵ Exodus xxiv.; Isaiah vi.; Ezekiel i.

is an advance to higher positions in the Kingdom wherein already they have found themselves.⁶

That heavenly blessedness, that spectacle of high and noble peace, was constantly beheld in Him. And as the Prophet of God He called on men to share in it. Though 'He resisted even to blood, in striving against sin,' He was never agitated in His inward consciousness. And He affirmed that, in the measure of each one's faithfulness, it may be so also with every man. Even when their work is accomplished in the midst of outward perturbation, this serenity may be experienced: they may feel an inward tranquillity which 'passes the understanding,' of those who are not acquainted with its source. 'This peace,' He said, 'is Mine, and I give it unto you. Now and here you may have "eternal life," in the knowledge of Me, and of Him by whom I have been sent. Now and here you may be in Heaven, as I, the Son of Man, now am, and be partakers with Me of its blessedness.'⁷ Thus He constantly taught all who

⁶ Our Lord spoke upon this subject after the manner of the writers of the Old Testament. They evidently thought of (what we call) the 'future' state, as of a condition which is now existing, and with which this visible world is in closest connexion, so that it can only be called 'future' with reference to our realization of it, and inheritance. Would not the distinct recognition of this fact remove the difficulty which arises from the absence of any explicit reference to an after-life in the Pentateuch, and in the historical books of the Old Testament?

⁷ 'This calmness along with the energy of Christ's demeanour,

were willing to listen to His words. And He brought out this part of His prophetic message still more forcibly by is impressive statement of an opposite experience as a consequence of opposite proceedings.

For, obviously, every one of His emphatic affirmations of the blessings which flow at once from conformity to the Divine Order of existence, implies present suffering as the consequence of an apostasy from, and neglect of it. This, too, was distinctly affirmed by His acceptance of those declarations of the Old Testament in which the experience of loss and suffering as immediately flowing from transgression, is affirmed with such emphasis as even sometimes to obscure the disclosure of that same experience in the future of transgressors. Let it be remembered that He received, nay that He Himself, anticipating the similar utterances of His apostles, must have often uttered statements such as these—That God ‘distributeth sorrows in His anger.’ That He ‘will not spare the man who walks in the imagination of his own heart, adding drunkenness to thirst,’ but that the Divine ‘wrath and jealousy smokes against that

—for if “unhasting” in the spirit of trust (“He that believeth shall not make haste”), He was also ever “unresting,” and His serenity, combined with the deepest sympathy—for surely it was not insensibility to the ills and pains the witnessing of which moves me to pity and disturbs my peace, whence springs the serenity of that brow and the governed calm of that countenance—appear impressively in every page of the Gospel History.’—*Divine Kingdom, &c.*, p. 184.

man, and that all the curses which are written in the book, will lie on him!’ Thus He affirmed, as in many forms of speech His apostles subsequently did, that such men will be ‘punished with a present and everlasting destruction from the presence of God.’⁸

But, besides accepting the statements of the prophets, and anticipating and authorizing those of His apostles on this subject, He often expressly declared in His own words the results which, even now and here, are wrought out by the selfishness and malignity which disturb the harmonies of the Divine Kingdom and frustrate the purposes of its establishment. ‘Whosoever,’ He said, ‘being intent on his own personal enjoyment, without regard to the claims of those who are around him, “will save his natural life, or ‘soul,’ shall lose it.”’⁹ And then He terribly depicted the horrors of that loss, when He spoke of the unprofitableness, even if the man ‘should gain the whole world,’ for its compensation. How terribly also did He describe the consequences of the anger which is allowed to fester into malice, which ‘becomes chronic disease when it finds vent in language of contempt, and affects the very vitals of the constitution when it is uttered forth in scorn.

⁸ Deut. xxix. 19; Job xxi. 17; 2 Thess. i. 9.

⁹ ‘Whosoever is willing to save his soul (his natural life, ψυχή), shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his soul for My sake, shall find it. For what will it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?’—Matt. xvi. 25, 26.

The first state of mind, He says, subjects thee to "the judgment." Thou dost experience separation from God and man. Thou canst not feel with the congregation of the Lord : thou canst not pray unto thy Father. Take care that thou dost not let it harden into the second state, for that will subject thee to the "Council," to a more complete and thorough alienation from all heavenly feelings, and all peaceful hopes, all capacity of entering into communion with God. And yet His discipline may work a cure of this also. But there are cases, and there is a period, wherein all discipline has been tried in vain, when the sentence on the soul is, "Let it now alone." Then it must be left to those raging and consuming fires which cannot be quenched even by the love of heaven, and of which the fires that are burning outside Jerusalem to consume the rubbish and offal of the city are the only sufficient emblems.'¹

Moreover, He represented even yet more awfully, this same experience as being lengthened out, and growing more intense, in that after-life into which the present life will pass. While those who have appeared in His likeness will 'enter into His joy,' for others a scene of endless confusion and discord, of weariness, and sorrow, and self-reproach, has been reserved. He called this with reference to the beatific region in which others dwell, an

¹ Maurice, '*Kingdom of Christ*,' part ii. chap. v.

‘outer darkness,’ and He spoke as if release and restoration from it were impossible. ‘They,’ He said, ‘who would pass from thence cannot.’ And, using one of the symbols of the old prophets, He declared that there the ‘worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched.’²

But the peace which is thus experienced as the result of work carried forward in the spirit which He inculcated, must also be distinguished by animation and assurance. Its partakers must hold fast their belief in the supremacy of the Divine Kingdom, and rejoice in the conviction that it is gradually encroaching upon the ground which is occupied by its adversaries, and is ever manifesting their inferiority, their powerlessness and their defeat.

We bring this forward as the fifth subject of His prophetic teaching. It plainly follows from, and indeed it is implied in, His representations of our earthly Economy as having been incorporated into the Eternal Realm, being, as we may say, built by the Supreme Organizer into the ancient framework of His Kingdom. In this view of human life, immortal vitality and irresistible power must distinguish it in so far as it is conformed to the laws of true existence. The conceptions which it is meant to embody, the ends which it has been brought forth to

² Isa. lxvi. 24.

realize, must, in their several parts, and in their entireness, be perfectly fulfilled. Innumerable spirits may fall away in hopeless separation, and yet its loyal participants, instead of ever doubting or fearing that the Divine Order can be weakened by the denials or contradictions of those apostates, rather see it brought out into clearer and further manifestation, by such means. The purposes of God become more impressive in their view, as the history of creature opposition to those purposes has lengthened, and as the admonitions flowing from that history have been confirmed.

Very emphatically and constantly did our Lord declare that this conviction should always be present to the minds of His disciples, and that from it they should derive strength and animation. 'They,' He said, 'who hear My words and keep them, are building on a rock. And they will be unshaken amidst tempestuous visitations by which all others will be overwhelmed. They will gloriously share in the present triumphs of righteousness and truth, and they will be exulting partakers in that coming "manifestation of the sons of God," in whom glories of the Divine character hitherto unknown, will be reflected.'³ These affirmations of their own triumph, and that of the cause to which they were devoted, appear in

³ We frequently meet with Christ's requirement of confidence and courage, e. g. in His severe interrogation, 'Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?' The fearful are joined with the 'unbeliev-

the announcements of His coming when ‘terrible things in righteousness’ will be done by Him, when, in fearful retribution, He will descend, as the vultures come down upon a carcase, wherever corruption shall be prevailing, and overthrow all the powers by which His kingdom is opposed. Moreover, He represented all these retributive visitations as preparing for the last and greatest when ‘the Son of Man shall appear in the glory of His kingdom, and before Him all nations shall be gathered.’

In these familiar predictions He brought forward the same overcoming progress going on to its completion, which His apostle afterwards depicted more fully for man’s encouragement amidst the toils which often look so hopeless, and the efforts which are apparently frustrated. He made the same proclamations of victory as those which St. John listened to, and which in loud exultation he re-echoed, as they came to him from afar, when he at length beheld God’s purposes fully accomplished, the ‘Heavenly city coming down upon earth,’ and majestically rising up amidst the confusion of man’s affairs, after the mystical number of its occupants has been completed in the paradise of God.⁴

In these utterances, the teaching of the ancient pro-

ing,’ amongst the ‘lost;’ and the truth thus conveyed is also brought out by St. Peter, when he declares that ‘to faith,’ ‘courage’ or ‘manly virtue’ (*ἀρετή*), must be added.

⁴ Rev. xix. 6.

phets, and indeed of all men of insight, whenever living, to whom the prophetic gift has been imparted—was brought out in full development. They contain the substance of the apostles' lessons and exhortations, and all the utterances of later thinkers who have been recognized as true witnesses of the Divine Constitution are comprised in them.⁵ Not one of those to whom former generations, or the men of our own generation, have looked up—have said or shown anything concerning the great laws and facts of human life, which cannot be found in Christ's prophetic declarations.

Moreover, all through His public ministry, His words were illustrated as well as confirmed by miraculous works which the Eternal Word carried on through the agency of the Humanity, with which He was so closely united in one Person, that those works may be indifferently spoken of as miracles of the Son of God or of the Son of

⁵ This comprehensiveness of Christ's instruction so that in it all genuine teaching was anticipated and included, follows from what has been said so often about His embodiment of the Divine form and order of existence. One who reads His words in their plain meaning, and in happy forgetfulness of their popular interpretations, will frequently be amazed at the manner in which instruction and thought, which has been long familiar to all sincere Christian men, is spoken of as 'original.' For example, those renowned lessons of Carlyle on self-renunciation in the famous 'Everlasting Yea' of his '*Sartor Resartus*;' what are they but an imperfect representation of Our Lord's words about the selfish 'saving of the soul' (cp. note⁹, p. 161)—imperfect, we say, because the great motive of personal affection to Him, the 'for My sake,' is omitted.

Man. They unveiled the Divine constitution and Economy in heaven and earth. They made known by the glimpses which they opened through the veil of time and sense, the universal relations which Christ is sustaining with 'all things visible and invisible.' And they manifested His working and His warfare in the midst of them. They shewed the form of the system through which our earth is moving, the subordination of every being and object in this system to moral ends, the harmonious blending of its materials and working of all its forces, with the certainty of the ultimate prevalence of truth and righteousness. In fact all the topics of His prophetic ministry may be discerned in the disclosures conveyed by the 'signs and wonders' which were wrought by Him.

And while in each separate miracle a separate portion and topic of His prophetic ministry may be discerned, when they are taken in combination, and discerned in that harmony flowing from their union, which is itself miraculous,—for such is their effect when grouped together—they disclose His Almighty Hand in every department of existence, and shew how perfectly in the unity of the Redeemer's life the unity of the Divine Scheme has been reflected.

CHAPTER III.

THE MINISTRY OF CONFLICT.

WHILE Our Lord was thus discharging His prophetic office, another aspect of His character comes under observation. We see this in His conflict as the Champion of man, in His efforts to rescue him from surrounding evils, in His protesting witness against the errors which mislead him, as well as in the instruction which He delivered with reference to the causes and alleviations of his sorrows.

This aspect of Christ's character is often very impressively brought forward by the Evangelists. In accordance with the representations in the ancient Scriptures which describe Messiah as 'clothed in garments dyed with the blood' of conflict, and as 'girding on His sword,' and doing 'valiant things in the cause of truth and righteousness'—they continually bring Him forward in a militant character, as Champion and Deliverer. In every page of His history we see Him realizing those symbols of the later Revelation wherein

He is pictured upon the white Horse, 'going forth, conquering and still to conquer,' into the regions of disorder and rebellion.¹ It was in the latter years of His course that He came prominently forward in this character, but it was also borne by Him in the earlier. For in every path of His activity, on all occasions of His intercourse with men, evil crossed His way, its agents and workings were continually encountered. And on such occasions He always showed that it belongs to the first conception of true existence that strong protests and unflinching opposition should be maintained against every work and worker of iniquity. He also showed that, in the circumstances of men, this conflict involves special efforts, and must be carried on under conditions which are different from those which obtain in regions where the ravages of sin have not extended, or, at all events, have not shown themselves in the same intensity as that in which they are seen on earth. Here the frame-work and circumstances of life have been changed throughout, by the irruption of the adversary. Partly for the purposes of discipline, and partly for those of penalty, the ground and atmosphere of our dwelling have been changed by his means. And many exertions of power and loyalty, in the struggle against this malignant agent, are needed in the circumstances of man which are

¹ Isa. ix. 5, compared with Rev. xix. 13.

not called for in worlds that have never been visited by evil.²

Now all these efforts were fulfilled, and their nature and obligation were made known to us by Christ. And in order that we may obtain a just estimate of His restoring work, they must be taken into our account. Perhaps the simplest way of doing this will be, *first*, to observe His conflict with the unconscious and mechanical agencies through which evil works out its physical and moral consequences; and then, *secondly*, to see how it was carried forward with the wilful and malignant powers through which human calamities have been originated.

I. Looking then to the unconscious and mechanical agencies of evil, we naturally begin by observing those which arise out of the earth's material and physical laws, and from its implication with the system into which it has been incorporated. Many of the calamities to which we are now referring, come upon mankind in an execution of the sentence 'Cursed is the ground for thy sake,' and they form part of the training which has been arranged for our recovery. From their very nature they

² Discipline, as well as penalty, was contemplated in the sentence which was pronounced on our first parents. The change wrought on man's moral nature by his apostasy, made severe exertions necessary, 'in order to wear out vicious habits of self-indulgence, and to recover the primitive strength of self-government which such indulgence has weakened.'—Butler's '*Analogy*,' part i. chap. v.

are always tending to transgress their appointed limits, and they would frequently do this if they were not kept under that firm restraint which man is empowered to exercise, and in which he is helped by the 'strong angels' to whom it has been said, 'Hurt not the earth and the sea, till we have sealed the servants of God in their foreheads.' We see Christ in direct conflict with these agencies, and especially with those which have arisen, or which have been strengthened, through man's apathy and sluggishness. He always placed Himself in most strenuous opposition to the careless indolence which is one of the main causes of human suffering. The necessities of His position involved Him in continual strife with these evils during the years of His seclusion; but the same strife was carried forward in His habitual proceedings after the thirty years had passed, as well as on occasions which are particularly recorded. It was implied in His own observance of, as well as in His constant insistence on, the maxim, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,' and its equivalent, 'Whatsoever thou wouldst that men should do unto thee, do thou also unto them.'³ In this form

³ This 'royal law, according to the Scriptures,' which was promulgated from the beginning, and enunciated by Moses (Levit. xix. 18) as one of man's first obligations, can only be satisfied by his mental transposition, as above described, into his neighbour's place. In all His work Christ perfectly embodied it, and further enjoined it also when He said, 'As' (*i.e.* 'in the same manner as') 'I have loved you, must ye also love one another.'

He enjoined the duty of realizing, in true and earnest sympathy, the needs and the sorrows of our fellow-men, and His own constant observance of that 'royal law' involved Him daily in a conflict with many causes of personal suffering and social disorder which required the exercise of energetic resolution and decisive will, and which frequently demanded an exercise of strong, courageous opposition.

That, in every position, man is bound to strive against these evils, He thus showed by His own conduct with respect to them. And He also showed how the strife should be conducted, by His observance of those ordinances which were bound upon Him as a Jew, and on the obligation of which He always earnestly insisted.⁴ His recognition of their authority, and insistence on their observation, may be clearly discerned in His memorable announcement with respect to His fulfilment of the law; and it appears, still more clearly, by His proceedings when certain occasions called for their observance. He inveighed against the men who made these commandments 'void by their tradition;' and He never, even apparently, disparaged them, except when they were practised superstitiously. That they were perfectly adapted to the ends which He had in view, and that every one observing them

⁴ Luke v. 14; Matt. xxiii. 2. Cp. Matt. v. 18, 19: 'I am not come to destroy but to fulfil (πληρῶσαι). . . One jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all things be done,' (γένηται), i.e. till the whole existing economy has ceased.

would be brought into contact with all the neglected causes of human suffering—is evident on the most cursory examination, especially while we keep in mind what is implied in real ‘godliness,’ and remember that it contemplates man’s bodily and intellectual improvement, his social well-being and his national advancement. Our whole nature, and all the relations in which we have been placed, are included in its purposes, and they are all promoted by these ordinances of the inspired legislator. For this end precepts of temperance and purity, and detailed personal sanitary regulations, were enforced on every Israelite. Whatever tended to produce physical exhaustion was forbidden ; frequent ablutions were prescribed ; and special disgrace and contumely, with heavy penalties, were affixed to the practices of gluttony and drunkenness. All the prohibitions of ‘unclean’ acts which are found in the Mosaic books, were set before the Israelite as an infringement of the terms on which he claimed distinction as ‘the called and chosen of Jehovah.’ Similar rules were inculcated upon Him in His dealings with the social framework of life. They were all fitted to mitigate, if they did not remove, most of those physical calamities to which mankind is liable, and this is especially true with respect to what are now universally recognized as the causes of famine and disease.⁵

⁵ We may repeat with regard to the statutes of the Jews that which has been emphatically said respecting their history, viz.: ‘That

Now in His own acceptance and enforcement of these provisions, He showed the duty of contending against the evils of man's lot by the use of preventives and remedies which have been divinely furnished. And He brought out this obligation still more emphatically by His prophetic protest against the selfishness, through which these saving and restoring agencies had been neglected.

From the very beginning every one of the prophets had raised his remonstrant voice against this negligence of the ordinances by which man's physical security and welfare might be furthered. They had all severely condemned the same carelessness in contending with the causes of human enervation and debasement. They said, 'Jehovah hath spoken this word, "The earth mourneth, and fadeth away. It is also defiled under the inhabitants thereof, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and

the legislature of the Hebrews contains indications of the remedies as well as of the diseases (of national life), and that Milton was, in this respect, too, right when he asserted of the Jewish books that "in them is plainest taught and easiest learnt what makes a nation happy and keeps it so." Yes, in the divinely-ordered life of the Jewish people, we shall find the rules of wise legislation and of healthful training and instruction, indeed all provisions and appliances for human welfare in all forms of it, whenever we will look for them. Nations of the most dissimilar habits may be taught by the Hebrews how to live. For, in all respects, temporal as well as spiritual, it has been appointed that other families of earth shall, through their family, be blessed.

they that dwell therein are desolate. Therefore the inhabitants of the world are burned, and few men left. The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth . . . All joy is darkened : the mirth of the land is gone.” ’ ’ ⁶ Christ listened to such words as these with His approval and assent ; they were also ever on His own lips, in the synagogue and temple services. And though we have none of His utterances to that effect, it cannot be questioned that He Himself publicly repeated them, shewing, in this way also, that He was indeed the ‘ Saviour of the body,’ as He was recognized and described by His apostle.

Then, again, the same obligation was brought out in His miracles with a clearness that could not be mistaken. In that control over every sphere of existence through which the Eternal Word, Who was united with Human nature in His Person, authenticated what He did as Man, no part was more marked and emphatic than that in which He wrought upon the agencies which are concerned with our sustenance and health, and with our personal security.

⁶ Isa. xxiv. 4—7. If these passages are examined in their connexion, it will be seen that the literal is the true interpretation of them ; that they are, in other words, strong, severe denunciations of the mischiefs which follow from the neglect of those divinely-instituted physical laws by the observance of which the earth’s fertility is increased, and man’s bodily welfare, and secular prosperity, furthered and secured.

This part of His habitual warfare was witnessed in His dealings with the sources of physical support, with the agencies which furnish man's 'daily bread.' Here especially He manifested His championship of human interests. He had shown Himself in efforts of strenuous conflict with those material disorders from which famines originate, when He insisted on those provisions of the Mosaic law that are concerned with the causes whereby the ground's fertility is endangered. And He showed this still more remarkably in those acts of miraculous production which supplied to needy multitudes the food which they required. The same working of His Divine power may be also seen when He wrought among the causes of disease. Those which are within the reach of human skill and knowledge He dealt with by means of the inspired enactments. But others which lie beyond human limits were miraculously controlled. Very emphatically was this fact disclosed by the statement, in which we must surely recognize something more than a casual figure of discourse, that He 'rebuked' the causes of lunacy and sickness. And still more clearly is this militant aspect of His character revealed when we observe His control over the elementary agencies by which man's welfare, and frequently indeed his existence, is imperilled. Once this was seen in an ordinary tempest such as is common upon inland seas, and once, also, and far more signifi-

cantly—as the expressive word used in describing the occasion denotes—when the storm was occasioned by a subterranean commotion and the volcanic forces which often upheave themselves so portentously beneath the earth's surface, raged around Him in such wild confusion as to threaten immediate destruction to all within their reach.⁷

In every case also He healed the afflictions of those who suffered from these causes of disorder, besides contending with the evils themselves in strenuous and unrelenting conflict. Sometimes He accomplished this healing restorative work upon those who came into His presence, by an application, in what may be called natural methods, of that larger knowledge of man's frame, and of the agencies at work in it, which has been recently acquired. And sometimes He did it by laying His hand, supernaturally, and in miraculous achievement, on the causes which are operating behind the springs of human agency.

In these disclosures of His healing functions, where

⁷ Σεισμός. This word evidently points to an instance of those subterranean movements which have frequently been felt in Lower Galilee, and of which many tokens are even now extant in Tiberias and its neighbourhood. Hence it represents our Lord on what may be regarded as the most arduous occasion of His life of conflict. In this view it may be looked upon as an eminent illustration of 'His coming down, out of the world of untroubled harmonies, into this world of ours which so many discords have jarred and disturbed, and bringing this back again, though it be but for one prophetic moment, into harmony with that higher sphere.'

He was simply bringing out in fuller expressiveness that which He had been habitually doing—we see Him confronting the three chief manifestations of bodily imperfection and disease. He first revived and restored powers that had been deadened, as in the instance of the paralytic who was brought before Him. Then He cleansed the system from its impurities, as in the cases of leprosy and hæmorrhage. And He also calmed those fevered, frenzied exaggerations of vitality which are witnessed in lunatics, and in those possessed of evil spirits. On all these occasions He manifested Himself as the Vindicator and Deliverer, as well as the Healer of mankind. He showed in these acts, as He had shown throughout His life, that the human framework was meant to be superior to the lowering disordering influences which are at work, producing and propagating disease, in this dislocated world. While, as in the three instances where He raised the dead, He also vindicated man's freedom from the agencies which manifest themselves in the process of decay and dissolution.

II. But He also came forward as man's Champion and Deliverer amongst evils which have been wilfully originated. Here we will first direct our attention to the social disorders of that place and period. Those Mosaic ordinances which were meant to secure the right con-

dition of households and cities and nations, and indeed of all forms of human association, were for the most part entirely neglected; and, in addition, the contagion of foreign vices consequent upon the Roman occupation of the country, along with the influx of wealth and the disturbance of social order, which were occasioned by the pilgrimages to the holy territory—largely increased the mischiefs under which many in all ranks were suffering most injuriously. This suffering was felt by the richer and more cultivated classes in consequence of the sensualizing influences which were thus originated, and it weighed heavily upon the poor in their experience of want and of oppression.

Upon the whole of this disordered suffering mass He discharged the office which we are now considering. First of all, those effective remedies which Moses had prescribed, were applied by Him to the social degeneracy and corruption of His time. Then while He was applying them, He went up and down amongst all ranks, alleviating the miseries which that degeneracy and corruption had inflicted. They were felt severely among all the orders of His people. If the lower classes were ground down through greedy covetousness and tyrannical oppression, the higher were scarcely less injured by their habits of indulgence and false notions of privilege, and by the lack of opportunities for exercising the best faculties of

their nature in ministering to their brethren who were in suffering and need.⁸

We see Him accordingly addressing Himself to all classes with the same beneficent purpose, and in the exercise of Divine impartiality. Mingling with 'publicans and sinners,' His life amongst them was, as He said, symbolized by the ministrations of physician to the sick. At the table of the rich Pharisee, He strove to cure the heartless selfishness with which such men are afflicted. It was expressly as the Restorer of the lost that He went into the house of Zacchæus, and encouraged and helped him in his efforts of self-reformation. And so, in kindly rebuke, as well as for the purpose of curing the anxiety and restlessness which He everywhere witnessed, He constantly contended with the exciting influences, the life distractions, of that place and time. 'Why are ye careful and troubled? One thing alone is needful!' Thus He spake everywhere. Even amidst the privileged classes, and while partaking

⁸ Thus 'He went about doing good.' But, certainly, not after the manner of the bustling platform philanthropy which is now commonly associated with this phrase. All His occasions of 'doing good' came in His appointed way. His good works were those which were 'prepared' for Him, and they were marked by considerateness as well as by compassion. (Cp. Psalm xli. 1.) Indeed, sometimes He disappointed applicants for His bounty by conduct which might have been looked on as unfeeling. All through His good doing, 'He not only,' as Dr. Chalmers says, 'provided in the best manner for the worth of individual character, but also for the economic regulation of the largest and most complex societies.'

of their luxuries, He kept to this healing purpose, for the accomplishment of which He also made known to them the meaning of His life. And by the proclamation of Himself, showing in His own course what man is, and is intended to become, He wiped out the stains, He enlarged the narrowness and shamed the meanness, which a false social condition had brought on men, and He drew forth and quickened affections which had been stunted and blighted by that debasement.

And, downwards, below those classes, through all the inferior grades which had also been corrupted and hardened by the bad social influences which were then at work, He went, fixedly intent on carrying out the same purposes of remedy and restoration. There were then, as there are now, large numbers placed midway between the rich and poor, with some of the worst characteristics of both orders marked on them; men who were at once proud and coarse and self-indulgent. But amongst these, too, never fastidiously shrinking from the repulsiveness of their vulgarity, He habitually moved, enlarging their perceptions, clearing them of their grossness and their impurity.⁹ Most especially, however, we

⁹ That 'derision' of Him by the 'covetous' (Luke xvi. 14), those obtrusive pushings for precedence, that 'giving honour to one another, instead of seeking the honour which comes from God,' of which we read—betray the coarse vulgarity of purse-proud men, who, in the circumstances of Jerusalem at that time, when there were so many opportunities of accumulating wealth, must have existed in considerable numbers.

see Him carrying forward this healing and consolatory process amongst the needy and oppressed. And through all the time that He was manifesting to those afflicted beings the Divine Order of their life, He was sharing their indigence, submitting to their necessities, bearing their reproaches. Thus in His public and official, as well as in His common, life, He was 'made like unto his brethren,' while He was occupied on their behalf. With an entire self-devotion of faculty and toil, He strove to secure for them their liberty and rights. He encouraged their efforts by new and better hopes. He strove to raise them in freedom and in knowledge; not only healing the injuries which a false social condition had inflicted, but also vindicating for the sufferers privileges of which they had been iniquitously and injuriously deprived.

Moreover, that spirit of indifference and sluggishness which had produced these individual and social mischiefs, was also constantly and most strenuously opposed by Him, when He protested against, and endeavoured to break up, the idolatrous formality, which was then prevailing. As we have already seen, this was especially witnessed in men's employment of the institutions and agencies of the redeeming dispensation, while they were disregarding the ends for which those 'means of grace' had been appointed, and those great views of truth, in the light of which they should be habitually used. The natural indolence of man, his besetting worldliness, his

absorbed concern with transitory things, beget that dulness of feeling, that spiritual slothfulness, of which we are here speaking. Now whoever disturbs him in this condition is always the object of his rage. We have here an explanation of much of the resentment which Christ encountered. It was not always malicious. The wrathful glance and fierce invective which so constantly assailed Him, came most frequently from men who were impatient at being disturbed in a lazy routine of unmeaning professions, and mindless services, from which no help or knowledge flowed into their souls. This is a true account of a large portion of His conflict, and in order to see it clearly we must again look back to the subjects of His teaching. It was when He summoned men to recognize their true place in God's kingdom, and the ends which they have been set there to accomplish, and when He spoke of visible institutions and ritual forms as being simply the means through which they might fill out their places in the Economy of Being, and realize that 'gift of eternal life' which was bestowed on them—that these 'contradictions of sinners against Himself' were especially awakened. Such words addressed to men like the indolent and idolatrous formalists whom Christ encountered, naturally aroused their wrath and their resentment. They called Him a 'troubler of Israel,' and complained that He was everywhere 'stirring up the people.' In this spirit they vehemently opposed

Him, and the true character of this opposition must be borne in mind, if we would gain a just view of the warfare in which the severest suffering was so firmly encountered by Him and so patiently endured.¹

In addition to this conflict with man's sluggish inconsiderateness, we also behold Him in an equally constant strife with the falsehood which was then prevailing. It was then, as it has ever been, presented under two aspects. There was the 'worldliness' of that place and time; the 'lusts of the flesh and of the eye,' and the 'pride of life;' and there were, too, the graver and more injurious falsehoods which were used as the pretexts of gain and of ambition. He always strenuously and without any compromise opposed both these evils, though He never did so fanatically, and it was in this opposition that we see Him acting as man's Champion in some of His most notable exertions of power and courage and devotedness.

In observing His opposition to the worldliness of His

¹ Idolatry, as Bacon's countrymen should remember, may prevail, with all its malignity, where there are no idols made with hands. In fact, it thus always shows itself wherever the obligation of the first three commandments, and the meaning of the first petition in our daily prayer, have been forgotten. We see clear traces of its presence as soon as men have changed the pure image of God into their own likeness (Psalm l. 21) or one of their own invention, and when 'His Name,' the authentic revelation of His mind and will, has not been kept in hallowed distinctness from all conceptions of their own.

place and time we must bear in mind that, not only through the Nazareth years, but ever afterwards, He lived amongst men neither as a recluse nor a philosopher. His life was the perfect realization of our ideal of unworldliness. Celestial light shone through His discharge of the commonest duties and engagements, so that, as He said, He was 'in heaven,' conscious of its purity and nobleness, while He was busied in the most ordinary occupations upon earth.² In other words, the 'world' and 'flesh' and 'life,' in their subordinate instrumental character, were reverently treated by Him, and their obligations were sedulously discharged, while yet He was absolutely untainted by the 'lust' of the flesh and of the eye, and wholly uninfluenced by the 'pride of life.' Now such habits necessarily brought Him into frequent conflict with the plausible, but generally false, conventionalities of the society of that place and time, as when He 'sat at meat in the Pharisee's house,' and was there approached by the 'woman who was a sinner;' or as on the occasion when He inveighed against the selfishness which kept up an interchange of kindness and hospitality only amongst those who could reciprocate it, and neglected the unfortunate and helpless, 'the halt and maimed.'³

² John iii. 13. Cp. Chap. xiv. 27; xvii. 14. 16.

³ On Christ's unworldliness see Lange's *Life of Christ*, (E. T.) vol. i. p. 84.

One can imagine the coldly-repellent and fastidiously-disdainful words and looks which He met on those occasions, and the impatient and angry demeanour which they required Him to encounter. Nevertheless these calls also of His mission were met firmly and faithfully, though they were met so calmly that the closest and severest scrutiny cannot discern any of the coarseness of a mere fanatic's opposition, any more than it can perceive the slightest trace of weak concession to aught that is inconsistent with the truth of life and the genuine dignity of man.

But, besides the unreality of mere worldliness, falsehood in far graver and more injurious forms was also vigorously opposed by Him. We are here thinking of some of the more notable occasions on which we see Him 'resisting even unto blood' in His strife with sin. And in speaking of these we must exercise careful discrimination, or we shall not understand the real character of this part of His conflict, or rightly appreciate His demeanour while it was proceeding.

Let it be observed, then, that some of the more palpable falsehoods which were rebuked by Him most severely, and which subserved the reputation, the avarice and the ambition, of men who must be distinguished as His enemies—were held and professed by those who, in many instances, were unconscious of their enormity. Many of these falsehoods had been received as profes-

sional traditions, and they had grown into their evil character through the natural working of the habits of formalism, for experience has shown that hardly any influence depraves human nature more than that which is exerted by the hard and hardening dogmas and the lifeless ceremonials of the idolatrous religionist. From the nature of its history and population, Jerusalem abounded with such men. The obligations of pilgrimage and the sacred associations of the place, filled the city with visitors by whom they profited. Moreover, certain religious trusts that would naturally be in existence there, and which appear to be denoted by the 'widows' houses' which we read of, severely tempted their cupidity, since those funds might be unfaithfully dealt with, and yet under forms of law which furnished protection to their administrators.⁴ Every place, such as Jerusalem then was, has contained men whose conduct will enable us to understand the class in question. They could easily justify to themselves as well as others, nay, they even consecrated by 'long prayers,' the abuses by which they profited, and but few

⁴ One of the commentators has suggested that the 'widows' houses' which Christ charged the Scribes and Pharisees with plundering, denoted some kind of religious trust, or charitable institution. And this seems probable, when we recollect the careful provision made for widows in the Mosaic law, and the consequent certainty that large funds which would naturally be administered by the men who came under the weight of Christ's denunciations, would be accumulated in Jerusalem for their advantage.

of them might have seen through the fictions which were transparently clear to uninterested bystanders, or have always consciously taken the bad advantage which they actually did take of their position.

And we can well understand how this very fact would exasperate the wrath with which they received His accusations. It was in the spirit and language of the old prophets, that He confronted and assailed them with the most terrible denunciations, which, however, for the reasons above indicated, may easily be reconciled with His manifestations of personal regard towards certain members of the incriminated classes. Regardless of their threats, the serious meaning and reality of which were well known to Him, He indignantly rose up against them, looked them severely in the face, and denounced the most terrible woes against them as the genuine successors of an iniquitous ancestry. 'Serpents!' 'Generation of vipers!' 'Children of the Evil One!' He did not shrink from assailing them even with epithets of this kind, if so He might break up the guilty illusions—though often criminal with the guilt of thoughtlessness, rather than of bad design—through and amidst which their misdeeds were carried forward. Nevertheless when He saw them willing to look into the realities of their position, He did not hesitate to approach them, nay, even to hold kindly intercourse with them and accept their hospitalities. Righteous indeed was He in this strife. Yet

how plainly was it the righteousness of love which He was manifesting, and very terrible must this have made His invectives and assaults to those—who were indeed the minority of His adversaries, and the most easily silenced—who knew that, in their own case, it was conscious hypocrisy and deliberate guilt which He was so indignantly condemning.⁵

But here also we must call to mind His work as Healer and Consoler, and especially that which was wrought upon those who were suffering in spirit from the mischiefs He was thus opposing. We are now thinking of men who had in a great measure, if not wholly, been brought involuntarily into that state of inward disease and discord wherein He found them. These sufferers

⁵ “The invincible warrior zeal, shaking loosely the slack reins, drives over the heads of scarlet prelates, and such as are insolent to maintain tradition, bruising their stiff necks under his flaming wheels. Thus did the true prophets of old combat with the false; thus Christ, Himself the fountain of meekness, found acrimony enough to be still galling and vexing the prelatical Pharisees. But ye will say these had immediate warrant from God to be thus bitter, and I say so much the plainer is it found that there may be a sanctified bitterness against the enemies of the truth.” And what other conception had Christ Himself of the meaning and import of His conduct in the matter in question? He felt a zeal within Him, answering to Milton’s picture, which could not, must not, be repressed. He knew it would be blamed, or set in charge against Him by false critics and uncharitable doubters; and He said, “The zeal of Thy House hath eaten me up.” And still it was, when rightly viewed, a necessary outburst of that indignant fire which is kindled in the sweet bosom of innocence by the insolence of hypocrisy and oppression!—Dr. Bushnell’s *Nature and the Supernatural*, p. 230.

should be carefully separated from the willing, persistent, doers of evil, the reprobates, as we may call them, who, like the Evil Spirit, had freely gone astray, and against whom, whether belonging to this or other spheres, He was relentless and inexorable. The men we have now in view may be properly called the victims of the misguidance and superstition, or of the wickedness, of others. And unto all such afflicted ones He was ever gentle and benignant, as He spoke to them the messages of hope and restoration, and laid His healing and restoring hands on them.

This reviving, restorative, work was in part effected, while He discharged His prophetic Office, by interpreting the main characteristics of the Divine Order, and showing them forth in His daily life. When He unfolded the fatherly character of God, and the benignant constitution of His kingdom, when He showed the nature of genuine goodness, and above all, when He insisted on man's reconciliation, and the certainty of the ultimate prevalence of right—He ministered to those unfortunate beings the healing influences which they needed. Health flowed in upon their spirits from the message which they heard from Him, and which they saw embodied in His Person and His Work. His own love and peace and blessedness set the topics of His declarations and assurances before them as realities. Hope was thus given to the despairing and strength to the enfeebled,

the richest consolation was ministered to the sorrowing, and companionship was found for the lonely and deserted. Altogether apart from the exercise of His miraculous power, His own words, spoken in the sympathizing tone, and accompanied by the Divine expression which belonged to the habits of that Life in which the very order and laws which He described were so perfectly reflected—harmonized the disorders, and cured the maladies of many of those victims and sufferers, as again they restored self-respect to those who had been overwhelmed in shame, and vindicated the righteousness of many who had been visited with loss and with dishonour.⁶

Thus He ministered, through the whole course of His official, as He did always in His common, life, as Healer and Consoler, to the spiritually disordered. But He also often came forward miraculously in that character. Manifesting this function of His office, He continually gave supernatural help to those whose relations with the spiritual system had been deranged by false conceptions of its nature, or by some inherited disorder, these causes of malady being, in certain instances, com-

⁶ The healing influences of truth (i. e. of true views of the Divine Kingdom), are felt when sincere speech flows from ordinary men who are gifted with real insight. But how much more might He have said, 'My doctrine shall drop as the rain: My speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass. Because I will publish the name of Jehovah: ascribe ye greatness to our God.'—Deut. xxxii. 2, 3.

bined so as to strengthen one another. We may arrange under two distinct heads the cases in reference to which this aspect of His character was witnessed.

There were, first, those who had been brought without any fault of their own into this diseased condition. Men who had been surrounded from their childhood with cold, or with gloomy, views of the Divine Kingdom, before whom, in fact, it had been misrepresented and blasphemed—were naturally visited with the affliction of which we are thinking, as were others also through some inherent, perhaps inherited, disorder of mind and temperament by the influence of which all their contemplations were darkened and deranged. In other sadder instances, these causes of disease might be combined so as to bow the sufferer into a still lower and more hopeless, even more desperate, condition than was elsewhere witnessed. Extreme cases of this kind there were, in which evil natures joined themselves to human spirits in what is commonly called demoniacal possession. And to all these involuntary victims of spiritual disease, He came with special messages of hope and counsel, laying His hands upon them in closest personal ministrations of sympathy and consolation. In these ministrations, He had always been engaged, but He brought them forth and expounded their full meaning when His Divine power was miraculously exerted in ministering to the lowest and saddest orders of these sufferers. Then He

sent forth His irresistible mandates among the evil spirits who are the denizens of that region of darkness and misrule by which we are surrounded.⁷ So He conveyed to those afflicted beings health and soundness, restoring harmony where there had been only confused strife within their spirits, and bringing them into sweet accord with the Economy in which before they were abiding so wretchedly. Nay, more than this, He thus vindicated that allegiance to the Good and True of which they were still conscious, and which, in part, was the occasion of their suffering, and He always stood forth as their Advocate, as well as Healer, against the coldly self-sufficient, and the haughtily contemptuous.

Then, again, there were others who had been overtaken by calamity because they had yielded to evil influences willingly, and had freely obeyed bad solicitations that had been addressed to them. In this way, like those in the former class, they also had become disordered and diseased. They were petrified within,

⁷ 'While "men possessed with devils" is not at all an equivalent expression for eminently wicked men, yet should it, I think, always, on the other hand, be held fast that lavish sin, and especially indulgence in sensual lusts, superinducing as it would often a weakness in the nervous system, which is the especial band between body and soul, may have laid open these unhappy ones to the fearful incursions of the "powers of darkness." They were greatly guilty, though not the guiltiest of men. And this they felt, that by their own act they had given themselves over to the tyranny of the devil, a tyranny from which, as far as their horizon reached, they could see no hope of deliverance.'—Abp. Trench *On Miracles*.

and, outwardly, they were no longer in accord with the Order of the Spiritual Economy. Like the first probationer, they had given way under the pressure of motives which had been urged on them by evil beings in their neighbourhood. They had not indeed been self-tempted, like those reprobate spirits whom He inexorably passed by, declining to exercise in their case any ministry of remedy and restoration. The profligate and covetous, nay, even the hard and malignant men, whose cases may be thus spoken of, rightly came within His reach as objects of compassion; and since the severity of their sufferings, also, was largely caused by their true and lingering allegiance to Good, He vindicated them against cold and hard assailants, and thus restored them to serenity and purity, and to perfect and sweet accord with the supreme laws of their existence. This ministry had been exercised by Him from the beginning, but He brought out its bearing and significance by employing, in the case of some of these men whom His ordinary influence could not reach, miraculous works in order to accomplish their recovery.⁸

But there was a third class of agencies to which He opposed Himself, in the discharge of His office as man's

* *Restoration of Belief*, p. 337.

Champion and Deliverer. For, besides the usual forms of human inconsiderateness and falsehood, He sometimes encountered purest malice in those who met Him, and this malice was often accompanied by cruelty. Sometimes, indeed, mere irritability, the anger which has been awakened in men who have been rudely disturbed in their dreams of selfishness and sloth—might have been mistaken for this evil. But frequently the bad emotion itself was found in its most horrible reality and odiousness. Angry tempers which had been long indulged had settled down and hardened into the deadliest malignity. Fearfully and awfully had they been perverted into that form of cruelty which must be regarded as the darkest characteristic of the lost, as it shows itself in the delighted contemplation of wretchedness and pain. With spirits so perverted, the ‘powers of darkness’ would naturally take up their congenial abode. And many such natures, thus possessed and quickened, confronted Him with their fierce activity. But, with unblenching courage, He met them all, and waged with them, to the very end, an unsparing and inexorable strife.

In such instances, we see Him at the very climax of the warfare which He had been habitually maintaining. Indeed from the beginning of His human life, those dark malignant powers, which are ever working through the world’s agencies, opposed Him. In all forms of

their assaults on truth and righteousness, He was beset by their assailments even through those silent years of which His history makes no mention, and they assailed Him still more violently afterwards, in the public scenes and occasions of His ministry. Throughout the whole of His earthly course, He 'endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself.' But the contradiction grew far more severe as the end approached, when the malignant agents who are gathered in the unseen regions that surround our earth, came forward and pressed Him sorely on the last occasions of His conflict. Then they combined their forces with the forces of His earthly foes. Reprobate spirits and malignant men, joined in dreadful hostility against Him in that final hour when His earthly contention with human error and wrong was closed. And, amidst the most terrible assemblage of events by which man could be surrounded, in the gloomiest hour of darkness, and under its most awful power—He passed through the lowest humiliation of our lot. He 'resisted even unto blood, striving against sin.' Declaring in His resistance the perfection of His sacrifice, and therein presenting that complete satisfaction of the Divine Law in which God was well pleased; manifesting thus, in His Person and by His acts and sufferings, the reconciliation to the Father of the human nature which had been assumed by Him—He 'humbled Himself' even to the very lowest stage of

man's humiliation, 'by becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.'⁹

Then we witness the closing fulfilment of His work as man's Champion and Deliverer. Throughout it had been a mighty conflict, the mightiest that was ever waged on earth! And just as we see it portrayed by the Evangelists, was it afterwards marvellously depicted in that vision which the Apostle beheld when 'the seals were opened.' Therein he first saw the social mischiefs against which Christ contended. Men's miserable jealousies and controversies were represented by him who sat upon the red horse; and he, who held the balances in his hand, betokened that want and destitution which seem to absorb all thoughts of the spirit's life in anxious fears lest the physical necessities of existence may not be secured. Then again, the wasting sicknesses of men, the languor and pain of their diseases, may be discerned in Death and Hades, who came forth upon the pale horse, just as they are now seen baffling the efforts of our love and zeal, and rendering almost hopeless man's conflict with the wrong and the wretched-

⁹ 'The phrase ἡ ἐξουσία τοῦ σκότους also occurs in Col. i. 13 (cp. Eph. vi. 12), in a passage which fixes the supernatural reference of our Lord's words on the occasion above referred to, when He used them. Σκότος does not signify individual sin: this is always called ἀμαρτία; but it denotes the sinful element generally; the antithesis of light, φῶς. Cp. Olshausen on Luke xxii. 52.' *Divine Kingdom*, 8^c. p. 207.

ness by which he is surrounded. In the afflictions of the 'souls beneath the altar' we can discern those evils which are inflicted designedly by the malice of men who are hostile to the truth. And the dark series was followed and closed by an event, the pattern of many that might have been witnessed in His course, which, unlike war and famine and pestilence, are not ordinary developments of causes that are known, nor like the persecution which is brought on by man's deliberate proceedings — but which come suddenly, with earthquake-like abruptness, as the product of causes uncomprehended and unknown. It may be indeed that this last portion of the vision has an especial reference to these convulsive upheavings in man's affairs which have so often thrown contempt on human policy, and compelled the 'kings of the earth and the great men and chief captains,' as well as subjects and bondsmen, to 'hide themselves' from the intolerable splendour of a power which they have never taken into account, and by which their own is overwhelmed. And in this view of what the Apostle saw last when 'the sixth seal was opened,' as well as in the former portions of his vision, we are reminded that, in every unwonted social emergency, as in all the usual developments of our affairs, the Lord Jesus is Supreme.¹

¹ We need not consult the pages of history alone, or only look out over wide fields of observation, to find counterparts of the imagery in this portion of the Apostle's revelations. They may be witnessed

For it was with reference to them that His voice was uttered to the four angels, 'Hold back those powers of destruction that have been let loose! Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.'

This part of the vision carries us on to the 'times of the end,' to that final consummation of man's history which is so often spoken of, as the great 'day of Christ's appearing.' And even to the very close, and especially in the symbol which represents Him on the white horse, as Chief of the 'armies of heaven,' He is seen 'riding forth, in His majesty, for the sake of truth and meekness,' while His 'right hand is teaching terrible things' to all who are opposing Him.²

more vividly on wider scenes, but they are not beheld more accurately there than we can behold them at this present time, and in the streets and houses of our own neighbourhood. Every man who is fulfilling the vow, that as 'Christ's soldier as well as servant, he will 'strive manfully' in the warfare to which he is called—constantly encounters them.

² Ps. xlv. 3—5.

Part III.

THE DEATH, RESURRECTION, AND ASCENSION.

CHAPTER I.

THE DEATH.

THIS account of the conflict in which He resisted even to death, completes our survey of Christ's public ministry. When it is connected with His discharge of the prophetic office, and is therewith regarded as the sequel and fulfilment of the call which He heard in His Baptism, and as the disclosure of those qualities which were heroically displayed in the Temptation—it is seen to perfect His public manifestation of those faculties and attainments by which His whole course was characterized and made illustrious.

Such a view of the events which mainly fill the record

of the Evangelists, is necessary, in order that His entire life may be seen truly and comprehensively. For the circumstances and occasions of His ministry simply brought out more clearly and impressively what had already been beheld in Him. After He was formally called to His public work, He spoke with an authority which He had not before assumed, and in His miracles He then opened out the unseen world, and showed, as He had never previously done, the supreme control which He was exercising through all its regions. But with these exceptions nothing was seen in, or heard from, Him throughout those years, which had not been heard or seen during the long period by which they were preceded. The highest manifestations of wisdom and courage, of tenderness and self-devotion, had been already witnessed in His character. Those qualities had been already lived out and spoken forth, and amidst the very scenes through which the Evangelists afterwards conduct Him in their history; in families and households, in streets and market-places, in the Synagogue, and in the Temple. In all these places, He had been living that same kind of life which we see Him living afterwards. He had shared in its interests and toiled amidst its duties; and in it, too, He had suffered from the contradiction of sinners against Himself, and had patiently borne the opposition and revilings of those who looked angrily upon the goodness, the love and righteous-

ness, which they beheld in Him. The same inflictions of human malice and perversity, the scorn and contradiction and the hatred which made Him suffer so severely in the scenes of His ministry, had already been encountered amidst the hard conditions, the dull and low companionship by which His life had been distinguished in the years of His seclusion. This is plainly intimated by those sources of information which we have consulted, and whose statements, combined with the fuller narrative of the Evangelists, show the symmetrical development of the character which was displayed by Him, as His life proceeded onwards to its close.¹

And in the circumstances of its close, the same order of development is witnessed. In their sadness and painfulness, and in the utter self-devotion which those occurrences betokened, we perceive an intenser expression of what we have observed already in the circumstances of His previous years. The distinct recognition of this fact is necessary to bring out some important

¹ We are here referring to the three sources of information respecting Christ's earlier years, which were described in the Introduction. And in this connexion it may be remarked as one of the most impressive among the many congruities of truth which may be discerned in the Gospel History, that His after-life is presented by His biographers as coming forth in such natural development from that course which our consideration (1) of the Purposes of His Incarnation, and then (2) of the Scene of their fulfilment—apart from any reference to His subsequent history—show He must certainly have accomplished.

aspects in which the close of His career should be regarded.

We perceive, then, all through the course wherein we have been following Him, in His discharge of ordinary duties and His common acts of kindness, as well as on the greater occasions of effort and conflict in His ministry—in all of them we perceive the voluntary subjection of every one of His human faculties and feelings into perfect conformity to the Divine will. Every power within Him which might have asserted itself unduly and lawlessly, was subordinated and controlled. In this sense, it may be said that all through His course He was dying unto sin, that He was habitually carrying His cross, up to the very hour when He surrendered His life to the men who slew Him, and submitted to the humiliation of the grave. Every act of His life was an act of self-oblation.² He was

² 'His entire life,' says Dr. Döllinger, 'was a continuous self-oblation: all His moral acts were a chain of propitiatory acts for the sins of man.' Our popular modes of speaking about the atonement have obscured this fact. 'May we not say that our doctrines of justification have veiled from us The Justifier; and that our theories of the atonement have hidden the sacrificial life and death of Him by whom it was effected? Moreover, the symbols also, as well as the dogmas by which they have been expressed, have darkened those realities. It is in deepest reverence and tenderness that I would here ask, if our familiar mention of His cross and of His blood, and our often sentimental, and, I must add, sensuous exhibitions of the mere physical sufferings of our Redeemer in the

always fulfilling the law of sacrifice which obtains universally, and was copying the highest Example of obedience to it which the universe has ever witnessed.

For the law is universal which requires in all created beings such a sacrifice of personal will and of individual affections to the behests of that Wise and Loving Rule through which the general welfare is secured. In and through this sacrifice, which comes forth from the conviction that each fellow-creature's welfare, and his advancement according to God's purpose, may not, under any circumstances, be hindered by individual indulgence, or again, by any arbitrary capricious acts of self-control—help is given to the helpless, supplies to the needy, consolation to the distressed. This is the Order under which all finite beings live; and every one's nature is raised, is quickened and ennobled, when its requirements are loyally adopted, and there is a loving acquiescence in its spirit and intention. Herein we see the essence of the law of sacrifice; and from its very nature, it is binding universally.³ It must be observed by all

last moments of His life, have not obscured that life-long devotion of His will and affections in which "He gave us an example that we should follow in His steps."—*Church Restoration*, p. 149.

³ It is a Catholic truth that 'the law of sacrifice is older than the fact of sin, and that the highest feeling demands sacrificial expression.' 'Video,' says St. Augustine in this very reference, 'quod et antea Pater dilexit nos, non solum antequam pro nobis Filius moreretur, sed antequam conderet mundum.' From the very nature of love, it must 'insert itself into the miseries of others, suffer their

spirits that have been created in the Image of the Eternal Word, Who has everywhere manifested the Mind and Will of God. Nay, we must look higher still that we may see in Him, as the Head of all principalities and powers, its perfect exemplification, since He is absolutely conformed to the behests of the Supreme. In various measures of perfection and of intensity it is everywhere fulfilled. But its most eminent and impressive manifestations have been seen whenever any obstruction has so arisen, so as to hinder the accomplishment of the Divine purposes in creation. There the Eternal Son, and with Him all the loyal races of the universe, have been engaged in an earnest and intense observance of this universal law, that so the let and hindrance, and the consequent misery and disorder, may be overcome. With this purpose the highest manifestations of devotedness have been witnessed; the severest suffering, the most painful self-denials, have been endured, for the purpose of rescuing the victims of evil, and restoring them. And thus it is that here, in this our world, as may have been the case also in other regions and communities, The Eternal Word, with The Ever Blessed Spirit, and, following them, the highest members of the celestial hosts—have been seen carrying out the

adversities and pains, and take upon itself the burden of their evils.’
—Dr. Bushnell, *Vicarious Sacrifice*, part i., where this truth is expounded with great fulness and ability.

purposes of that tender love which was shown by The Father in willing man's rescue and recovery.

This intervention on our behalf, in accordance with the universal law of sacrifice, began with the beginning of our history, and it has been in the view of every right-minded, and true-hearted man, whenever or wherever he has been living.⁴ Every loyal member of our race has sought to be conformed to the spirit and principle displayed in it, but absolute conformity thereto has never been attained, except in that Perfect Life which we have been surveying. In the human nature of Jesus, that sacrificial intervention was clearly witnessed: to that absolute devotedness of the Eternal Word, we see His human demeanour perfectly conformed. Through every step of our past review we can discern this suffering and sacrificial aspect of His character: everywhere we see Him humbling Himself while He 'fulfilled all righteousness,' and meeting and bearing every penalty that was consequent on man's transgression. In His daily share of the privations and loneliness, and of the sorrows, of a poor man's home, and in

⁴ 'Even without the limits of Christ's visible kingdom this principle (of vicarious sacrifice) has been perceived and exemplified. The well-known passage in Plato's *Republic*, which sounds almost like an echo of inspired prophecy in its thrilling description of the perfectly righteous and loving man, whom, notwithstanding his righteousness and love, his fellows will scourge and crucify—is, in fact, but a summary of the whole experience of mankind.'—H. N. Oxenham's *Catholic Doctrine of the Atonement*, p. 73.

His self-devoting kindness to all who claimed His sympathy and aid—we see the clearest reflection of that Love which, from the very beginning, had identified Itself with man's loss and disadvantage, and which had so effectually helped him in the midst of them. That pattern of self-sacrifice was evidently before Christ's human mind. We see it copied by Him, just as we might see it copied now if one of the sons of fortune should place himself in the midst of the most loathsome and squalid neighbourhood of the metropolis, breathing its fœtid air, bearing the vulgarity and ruffianism of its inhabitants, in order that they might be reclaimed, and raised from their humiliation. Or the illustration would be more impressive if such an one were seen to go lower still, betaking himself, with the same purpose, to the regions of slavery and barbarism, and making himself one with the sufferers there for their advantage. In such cases we should get a faint picture of Christ's manifestation of that burden which the Eternal Son took upon Himself in His reconciling work, from the very hour when man's needs arose. He assumed just such a relation of sympathy and tenderness with His fellows, as the Second Person of the Trinity had assumed with mankind in His redeeming intervention. 'In all their afflictions He was afflicted,' sharing with them in their sorrows, and bearing with them all the disadvantages and painfulness of their privations.

In every part of His common life, when it is examined

under this aspect, we can discern this special and distinctive law of man's existence, though it was brought out in His public ministry most impressively. In His restraints and sufferings, in His voluntary 'refraining of His spirit, and keeping it low,' for the sake of others—it is clear that the Man Jesus always had in view, He was habitually reflecting, that typical Pattern of the Eternal Son's great sacrifice for man's sake, in which this law of universal existence was perfectly embodied.

How often, and how emphatically, He declared this principle, upon which the habits we have been observing cast so much light—is familiar to every reader of the Gospels. After declaring the mission of The Eternal Son by saying that 'He was given that whosoever trusted in Him should not perish, but have eternal life,' He further affirmed that 'The Son of Man had come to seek and save that which was lost.' 'I am come,' He said, 'that men might have life and that they might have it more abundantly.' And this habit of thought and contemplation which was the spring of His activity, and the supporting motive of His endurance—was still more plainly declared in His acts of worship. The services of the synagogue, in which He habitually joined, were so intimately related to those which were celebrated in the Temple, that we may say their participants shared in the Whole Burnt Offering, which was there presented, day by day continually, as a memorial of the Divine Redeemer's

sacrificial intervention. Every Jew throughout the world, in his daily and special convocations, claimed a share in it. Upon every one the sacrifices of righteousness and of thanksgiving, and the sin offerings in compensation for offences, were obligatory ; and all of these were intimately connected with the Whole Burnt Offering, which constantly declared the atoning basis on which the reconciliation of the world depended.⁵ Our Lord in His Jewish character, as the Son of David, habitually took part in them. And He thus showed, as expressively as could be shown, His recognition of the fact that we have been brought back into God's family by the redeeming work of the Eternal Son, and that our restored life must be perfected by loving conformity to His sacrifice. For we may say that this truth also radiates from the altar : not only the fact of our Redemption, but all the duties which flow from it, are therein reflected and revealed.

Thus did He embody and so afresh declare the Work which had been effected by the Eternal Word, Who was conjoined, though not confused, with perfect human

⁵ 'The Whole Burnt Offering, regarding moral transgressions, had no connexion at all with the Mosaic institutions, although Moses ordained some particular customs to be observed with it. It was not confined to the people in covenant ; the patriarchs before the institution of the covenant having Burnt Offerings, but neither sin or peace offerings. Moreover, while the covenant was in force, the sacrifices of non-Israelites were always Burnt Offerings.'—*Johnstone's Israel after the Flesh*.

nature in His Person. And He did this in such perfection of act and spirit that it was one sacrifice of the Man Jesus and of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity which was witnessed through the days of His humiliation, and which culminated, reaching its final climax, in His last agony and passion, and in the precious Death wherein that illustrious sacrifice was perfected. All the circumstances which led on to and accompanied that event, His heavy forebodings, His desertion and betrayal, His physical sufferings and mental anguish, with the mysterious spiritual darkness which accompanied them—were in fact an enlarged and intenser experience of what had been already borne by Him.

Most impressively we see in His last hours how truly He was a 'Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.' But while the intensest experience of what He had already undergone was witnessed in all the circumstances of those hours, there are especially three aspects in which we then see what were in fact His life-long sufferings rising towards their climax and consummation.

There was, first, the loneliness, which had been such a sore burden all through His life, and which grew more and more trying to Him, until, in His last hours, it became utter and unbroken. That lofty temper of spirit which, on account of its sensitiveness as well as of its

height and depth and largeness of perception, makes all who are recognized as sharers of His likeness suffer from this burden—caused Him to be, of necessity, apart from, though He was amongst, mankind. Men of sense and of the world, dull and low and narrow as they were, could not perceive His views, or enter into the motives of activity which He derived from them. Both His perceptions of truth, and the reasons for work and endurance which were thence supplied, were to them incomprehensible.

His first recorded utterance, ‘Wist ye not that I must be about My Father’s business?’—shows that He was already suffering under this affliction. His mother’s heartfelt pondering of His words enabled her to look with some insight into their depths of meaning, and so may have given Him, in His earliest years, some of the blessings of companionship and sympathy. But His thoughts and purposes would soon pass beyond her range, and her maternal tenderness would naturally shrink from dwelling on the future to which they were so evidently leading Him. And there was no other member of the holy family who could give Him the blessing of sympathizing fellowship. In His household circle He was almost alone, though He was always seeking for love and tenderness. So was it in His work, and in His intercourse with the other members of His community. Notwithstanding His pleasant, cheerful

habits, His genial companionship and kindly helpfulness, there was what they would call a strangeness in His words and manners which repelled such men as those around Him, both in His moods of cheerfulness and of solemnity. Then, in His national character, His separation from the partisans on both sides, from the fanatics of movement, and the bigoted advocates of conservation—His solitude was deepened rather than relieved. Nay, even in the Synagogue and in the Temple, He could not find among the mere observers of outward forms, and still less among the irreverent assailants of hallowed things—relief for that craving after sympathy which the tender sensitiveness of His nature made Him feel so keenly. We know how patiently He mortified this craving, with what constant resignation He crucified this natural desire. He could not, indeed, like stoical natures in their cold and haughty self-dependence, or like the cynical mockers of their kind, proudly suppress these earnest longings, and contemptuously return the neglect of His companions. His later friendships betoken the fact that He sought companionship, though He found it not.⁶ And the need

⁶ 'He not only gave sympathy, but wanted it, too, from others. He who selected the gentle John to be His friend; who found solace in female sympathy, attended by the women who ministered to Him out of their substance; who, in the trial hour, could not bear even to pray without the human presence, which is the pledge and reminder of God's presence—had nothing in Him of the hard, merely self-dependent character. A stern spirit never could have said, "I am not alone, the Father is with Me"—never could have felt the

became more marked and painful, since in the ripening of His character, He stood more and more apart from those around Him, as we see especially in the years of His public ministry, and amidst His labours of prophecy and conflict.

In the statements that 'they could not understand His sayings,' and that 'many departed from Him'; in the remonstrance 'this be far from Thee'—we perceive the plainest intimations that He was more and more alone as years passed on, until, at last, the aching need of the companionship which was denied Him, entered as one of its bitterest elements into the agony of His last hours. It was as plainly as it was sadly, betokened, when He was left, as one utterly forsaken, in the hands of His captors; when no friend came near Him in the crowds before the judgment-seat, or in His way to Calvary; and we see it, in its completeness, in His solitude upon the Cross. That isolation from fellowship which became more and more sad and painful, in suffering which He patiently endured and never shrunk from through all the years of His life—reached its last degree of sharpness and intensity in the hour when He died.

loneliness which needed the balancing truth. These words tell of a struggle; an inward reasoning; a difficulty and a reply; a sense of solitude; "I shall be alone;" and an immediate correction of that: "not alone—the Father is with Me."—F. W. Robertson, *Sermons*, vol. i.

But, besides that which arose from His loneliness, the pain which He also suffered from misconception reached its climax in that hour. It is certain that throughout His course, men's careless, or their perverse, misapprehension of His meaning and purposes, had been the source and occasion of much of His sorrowful endurance. Yet it could not be avoided. In many cases it necessarily arose from that comprehensiveness of vision which reconciled, in His view, what to the world were contradictions and inconsistencies. And this may be said of the personal habits of His life, as well as of the topics and announcements of His teaching.

This reason of His suffering became more trying as His intercourse with mankind was widened, and His social relationships increased and grew more complicated, since He was thus constantly brought into contact with more varied phases of thought and feeling, as well as of activity. Living as He did in the cordial realization of all relationships, receptive of the pure and holy influences which were flowing in from every side upon His spirit—how could the one-sided sense-bound men who gathered round and looked on Him, understand His thoughts and His emotions! Accordingly while some, in kindly hopeful mood, said, 'He is a good man,' others retorted, 'Nay, but He deceiveth the people.' Some complained of His free indulgence, and called Him a 'wine-bibber,' while others condemned Him for aus-

terity. It was so, likewise, in His teaching. His reverence for the past, for the institutions and traditions of His country, made Him the object of contempt on the part of the liberal spirits who, at first, were attracted by the openness and freedom of His teaching. On the other hand, the hard and bigoted guardians of Jewish traditions resented the spirituality of His interpretations, and His constant insistence on the duty of viewing all outward forms and services in the light of the principles upon which they rested, and the ends which they were meant to further. 'He knew their thoughts.' He saw the reasons which even apparently justified some of them in saying, 'He is beside Himself.' Yet He never shrank from this great trial, nor did He attempt to mitigate it by explanations which, indeed, would have been unintelligible. That only thing which could be done, He did, by constantly opening out more comprehensive views, and laying down the higher lessons of that wisdom which would, He said, in due time 'justify her children.'

Even those amongst His nearest associates, who confided in Him most trustfully, often felt their confidence in Him shaken and weakened, as He well knew, and this more and more towards the close, when He expounded the inner laws, and wider relations, of His kingdom. How earnestly did He then repeat His frequent saying 'Blessed is he who is not offended in Me!'⁷ Yet many were con-

⁷ As though He had said, 'I know that many of the stumbling-

stantly offended at what they heard from Him, and the consequent pain which He suffered grew more and more severe until, at last, His apparent failure, His seeming abandonment by God, and His helplessness beneath the injuries wrought on Him by man—looked as if it justified the doubt which was so sadly expressed in the disappointment of the two who said, ‘We thought it had been He that should have redeemed Israel,’ as well as in His desertion by the others, and the denial of Him by the most confiding and hopeful of them all.

But, greater than the suffering which was caused by the misconceptions to which He was subjected, and by His loneliness, was that produced by the evil which He saw in the men around Him, and this cause of endurance was sharpened by the love which He bore them and which was constantly moving Him in such earnest efforts for their restoration. We know what acute pain is felt in that abhorrence with which truthful, pure and noble, souls regard the falsehoods, the defilement and meanness of their fellows. What, then, must He have felt on this account! It is certain that this cause of His sorrow

blocks (σκάνδαλα), the reasons of misconception which you see in others, may, apparently, be discerned also in My Life and Teaching. But blessed is that man whose earnest thoughtfulness, and simple loving trust, shall enable him to perceive these words and acts of Mine in their true aspect, and discern their perfect harmony with My Divine character and claims.’

must have wrought on Him from His earliest years, as soon as He saw, hardly at first believing what He saw, the lowness and selfishness, the perverse and blind wickedness of those with whom He was associated, whose nature He was sharing.

And this cause of suffering, also, increased as His knowledge of men and their affairs became enlarged. Through all the years of His seclusion He had been, on this account, distinguished as a 'Man of sorrows.' But into what depths of affliction was He led on this account when the calls of His ministry required Him to contradict and unrelentingly oppose, the men whom He encountered in the towns and villages where it was carried forward! Here was the main reason of that long-drawn out sadness which only once was intermitted.³ It was not only the physical suffering and the social disorder that He witnessed, by which His spirit was oppressed so grievously. Upon those evils, indeed, He could look with comparative serenity, knowing their needfulness as discipline and chastisement. And this He had shown by His comparative abstinence from any interference with them during His earlier years, as He afterwards showed it on a memorable occasion when He sent away the multitude which had sought Him from unworthy motives, and caused them to endure the unrelieved painfulness of hunger. But, the base selfishness, the meanness, the ingratitude,

³ Luke x. 21. Cp. Acts ii. 26.

the malice, the hardness and cruelty, which He encountered—overcame Him.⁹ And His sorrow on this account grew deeper and darker till it reached its fulness in the fearful anguish and horror of His death.

Fearful were His sufferings, indeed, and only by this, with the other causes which we have named, can they be explained. For, surely, it was not fear, any more than it was remorse, which occasioned them.¹ Nor may we accept the dark fiction of theology that His Father was judicially inflicting on Him pain in expiation for man's guilt. No! It was human wickedness, which mainly

⁹ 'The recoil of His horror is dreadful. . . . He groans aloud, falls on His face, calls to His friends to stay by Him, utters anguished cries to God, shows discoloured drops resembled to blood exuding from His face—suffers, in a word, more incontinently a great deal than either soldier, philosopher, or man of spirit, should, nay than many a malefactor would! And so it truly seems to me that He ought: for who of all mankind had ever a tithe of His sensibility to evil? Indeed one of the most difficult things for us mortals, is to be duly shocked by wrong, and feel a just horror of its baseness. Impassive to fear, even as God Himself, He is yet wrenched all through, in every fibre of sensibility, by the appalling and practically monstrous scene before Him. Human creatures, creatures in God's image, going to crucify their Divine friend from above! . . . He shudders in throes of recoil even as God's pure angels would, meeting such a death. Nay, more and worse, as He has a vaster nature, and a deeper sensibility, with only a human apparatus to support the shock.'—Dr. Bushnell, *Christ and His Salvation*, p. 210.

¹ It has been justly remarked that 'the pathology of His suffering was exactly opposite to that of fear, in which the blood flies from the skin, retreating on the heart instead of being forced outward, and exuding from it. There was, too, no appearance of panic in the sufferer's action. He expressed what He felt when He said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful."'

appalled and shocked Him. By this He was crushed in deepest anguish to the ground. Through this cause He was overwhelmed in the direst and most fearful agony which man has ever known.

How fearful it was, we know, though it was hidden from the men around Him under the calm demeanour which He maintained, even when He met His betrayer and encountered the angry multitude which surged around Him in the Judgment Hall. They did not perceive that fearful climax of His grief, which had been continually increased by other causes besides those we have enumerated, any more than the men in Nazareth and Capernaum, or those who observed Him in Jerusalem, saw the poignancy of the sorrow which aching loneliness, and perverse as well as often unavoidable misconception, along with His deep abhorrence of man's baseness and falsehood and fierce malice—had constantly occasioned. How plainly we can see it now! And its first, originating cause, too, can be discerned in the unwavering steadfastness with which He kept before His mind the great Pattern of self-devotion with which His own obedience was blended. In the other aspects of His course we see the Divine Character, the Will and Mind of God. But here, in His life-long suffering, He manifested most impressively the Divine Compassion, the Redeeming Love which shrank from no sacrifice 'for

us men and for our salvation,' and which became continually more and more impressive in His sad utterances in Gethsemane, in His majestic self-control and silence in the Judgment Hall, at every step which He took towards Calvary, and then in the fearful spasm and convulsion which ended His life upon the Cross.² That last throb of anguish by which His human frame was at length broken down, completed His earthly work and fully manifested the perfectness of that Atoning Sacrifice which had been in force from the beginning of man's history, and after

² 'It may, therefore, with certainty be affirmed, that between the agony of mind which the Saviour endured in Gethsemane, and the profuse sweat mixed with clotted blood which so rapidly followed it, violent palpitation of the heart must necessarily have intervened; this being the only known condition which could have been at once the effect of the former occurrence, and the cause of the latter. In like manner, when on the cross this agony was renewed, and by the addition of bodily suffering was increased to the utmost intensity, no other known condition could have formed the connecting link between the mental anguish and His sudden death—preceded by loud exclamations, and followed by an effusion of blood and water from His side, when afterwards pierced with a spear—than the aggravation even to rupture of the same violent action of the heart, of which the previous palpitation and bloody sweat were but a lower degree and a natural prelude. Whilst every other explanation hitherto offered has been shown to be untenable, the cause now assigned for the death of Christ, namely, RUPTURE OF THE HEART FROM AGONY OF MIND has been proved to be the result of an actual power in nature, fully adequate to the effect, really present without counter-action, minutely agreeing with all the facts of the case, and necessarily implied by them.'—Dr. Stroud, *On the Physical Cause of the Death of Christ*, p. 155. See also Letters from Sir J. Simpson and other eminent Physicians in the Appendix to Dr. Hanna's *Last Day of our Lord's Passion*.

the Pattern of which the whole of His Life and Ministry was fashioned. Then men saw in complete embodiment the principles which had moved Him in all His work on their behalf, and to which in deepest sympathy they themselves must be conformed, if they would follow Him in that true pathway of the sons of God wherein the ends of existence are accomplished upon earth.

And yet beyond earthly limits one other step in His humiliation was needful, and He took it when He submitted to the humiliation of the grave, and to the ordinance which removes the human spirit into that mysterious abode where all past generations are assembled. Instead of passing at once into that region of blessedness for which His human spirit was prepared, He 'descended into Hades,' and there ministered among the dead as He had already ministered among the living. Through the mysterious communications which those spirits 'in safe keeping' then received from Him, and in which His loyal adherents through all previous generations of human history beheld their course interpreted and justified, while His adversaries in the same generations were terribly confounded—the purposes of His humiliation were completed. The fragmentary parts of previous revelations were then gathered into one perfect exhibition.³ Revealing Himself as 'Lord of the dead as well as of the living,' He there completed His disclosure

³ *Divine Kingdom*, &c. pp. 104–111; 207–209.

of the life which is rightly passed in accordance with the objects for which life has been bestowed, in which man's immortal blessedness is secured, and the purposes of The Supreme carried on to their victorious accomplishment.

From that lowest point of His humiliation, we now turn to the ascending course along which by the laws of the Divine government this voluntary humbling of Himself conducted. Beyond that obedience to the death of the cross and that submission to Hades and the Grave we will follow Him into His great exaltation in which a 'Name has been given Him which is above every name,' and 'in which every knee shall bow' with love, with thankfulness and adoration.

CHAPTER II.

THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION.

‘It was not possible’ that one who had so perfectly conformed to the Divine laws, ‘should be holden’ by those powers of humiliation which had been appointed to visit their transgression. And this was so plainly seen by the Evangelists after the Pentecostal illumination had been poured on them, and when they looked upon their Master’s Life from that commanding point where all its events fell into their proper order and were seen in their true aspect¹—that they relate the events of His resurrection, and the circumstances which followed it, as naturally as any of the preceding details of His course.

In that same calm and circumstantial tone and method which are so impressive in the other portions of their narrative, they described the events which happened during the forty days, when ‘He showed Himself to them

¹ Cp. Introduction, *ad finem*.

alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them and speaking to them of the things pertaining of the Kingdom of God.' Unconscious of more than a portion of the deep significance of their testimony, just as they were evidently unconscious of the greatness and sublimity of the character which they had dramatically portrayed in the pages they had already written, they calmly recount the actions and the words so fruitful of momentous inferences—which they then saw in and heard from Him. Avoiding in this instance as they had always already done, everything that was merely startling and prodigious, they presented—and most evidently under higher guidance than their own—an unembellished unexaggerated narrative of His continued embodiment of the true form of human life, and of His reflection, in His person and His acts, of that system in which our world has been incorporated.²

² 'In the closing paragraphs of the Gospels we find the same simplicity, the same archaic majesty, the same dignity—the dignity of guileless truth, the same avoidance of passion and of exultation, which we find in the body of the Gospels, and in each Gospel separately.' When this fact is attentively considered, it furnishes one of the most remarkable evidences of the authenticity of these paragraphs. For 'nothing is more evident than that, away from their Master, the Evangelists do not fail to show themselves what they are, visionaries and men low in their way of thinking. They could only write in this style when they were recording things which they saw in Christ, or words which they had heard from Him. So that these final passages carry the marks of authenticity with peculiar distinctness. They could not have been written at all if they had

And now, for the purpose of completely fulfilling the object of these pages, we will, first, survey the details which the Evangelists have given, and then gather from them the principal disclosures which were conveyed by that reflection and embodiment.

The circumstances which they have recorded in the Gospels come first in the order of our survey, but others which are also related in the Acts, respecting Christ's appearances after His Resurrection, are equally significant. Very distinctly is the impression conveyed by all the Evangelists that His risen body was identical with that which it succeeded in respect of its shape and aspect, while in its essence and in its modes of life and of activity, it was ineffably superior. His voice was recognized; His countenance wore its old expression; the outline of His figure had undergone no change: to the vision and hearing of His friends He was still what He had always been. But we are also told that His movements were not impeded by any material obstruction, and that the grossest substances could not then present any hindrance to the instant fulfilment of His will. Of this He gave many impressive tokens, during the days which followed His resurrection, when He continued His familiar

not been truthful records of what the four writers had actually seen and observed. If there be reality anywhere in the Gospels, there is reality here.'—*Restoration of Belief*, p. 381.

communings with His disciples, entering into their society, taking part in their engagements, and speaking with them on the topics of their former intercourse. They further tell us that, suddenly, and while He was in the very act of blessing those who were around Him, He was removed into the invisible region which surrounds our world. Then we read of His manifestations to St. Stephen and St. Paul. And the accounts of both these disclosures carry forward and deepen those impressions of His nearness and sympathy, and also of His exaltation, which are produced by the previous statements of the Evangelists. Stephen saw Him 'standing on the right hand of God,' as if He had come forward for the succour of His servant, and for his encouragement. In the unveiling which St. Paul looked upon, He markedly identified Himself with His suffering disciples by asking, '“ Why persecutest thou Me,” for, in the persons of those victims, I suffer at thy hands.'³ And finally, the significance of these communications was enlarged and deepened in the vision granted to St. John, who beheld His celestial glory in closest nearness as well as contrast

³ It has often been observed that when Stephen saw 'Jesus standing on the right hand of God,' he witnessed a token singularly expressive of His help and sympathy. 'Scitis, fratres,' says an ancient Father, quoted by Humphry (*Commentary on the Acts*), 'quia sedere judicantis est, stare vero pugmantis vel adjuvantis. Stephanus statem vidit Quem adiutorem habuit.' The same thought is suggested when we compare the question, 'Why persecutest thou Me?' with our Lord's words in Matthew xxv. 40, 45.

with the dark confusion and misrule which evil has originated upon earth.

Amidst that glory the Apostle saw Him, just as He had been seen immediately after His resurrection, in a manifestation wherein the glimpses that had been accorded to the Martyr and the Apostle—were enlarged and perfected. And in that complete disclosure St. John at once recognized the same vision which the ancient Seers had looked upon.⁴ With the insight which he had manifested in his recognition, at the beginning of his Gospel, of Christ's pre-incarnation ministry, as well as in his statement that 'Isaiah saw His glory,' and spake of Him—the Apostle perceived that the Order on which he looked was that abiding Order of the Universe upon which the ancient prophets gazed, and he declared this fact by carefully using the same words and symbols, the epithets and designations, which Moses and Micaiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel had employed.⁵ Central

⁴ Exodus xxiv.; 1 Kings xxii.; Isaiah, vi.; Ezekiel, i.; Daniel, vii. and x.

⁵ 'Let the prophets be your commentators (on the Apocalypse). You will perceive how St. John the Divine adopts their glowing imagery: how he takes up the prophecies of David, Joel, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Zachariah, and of other Hebrew seers, as if they were earlier chapters of his own Apocalypse: how he adds his prophecy as a sequel and continuation to theirs; or rather, to speak more correctly, how the same Divine Spirit Who spake by the prophets in the Old Testament, completes His own work by the Book of Revelation in the New.'—Bp. Wordsworth's *Lectures on the Apocalypse*, p. 164.

amidst the heavenly splendour and at its loftiest height, 'above the firmament,' and on the sapphire throne which Ezekiel has described with so much vividness, St. John beheld, just as the prophet had done, his Lord occupying the same position, and invested with the same glory in which He had always lived, although, excepting in one brief disclosure, it had been hidden for so many years by the darkness and confusion into the midst of which He had descended.⁶

If we carefully examine these statements respecting the nature of Christ's resurrection body, and the glories which followed His ascension, we shall see that they interpret the framework of the surrounding Economy in which our world has been incorporated, and show its unity with the conditions of human nature and society, as well as the implication of man with the great movements of the Universe. They vividly pictured to the eye, and they perfected, those revelations

⁶ In the transfiguration 'His face shone as the sun (cp. Rev. i. 14.) Even His clothes gleamed in the bright light, white as snow (cp. Psalm civ. 2), white as no fuller on earth could white them' (Matthew xvii. 2; Mark ix. 3). 'The celestial luminousness of His inner man, which else was still bound by the obscurity of His earthly appearing, was now manifested. It was a mightier reappearance of that phenomenon which the Baptist saw when The Spirit descended upon Him; a fore-shining of the perpetual glorification to be afterwards realized. The heavenly being of Jesus broke forth out of His earthly. It was as if He stood already upon the heights of the other world, as if already He belonged to the realm of spirits.'—Lange, *Life of Christ* (E. T.), vol. iii. p. 251.

which we have seen Christ made, in the fulfilment of His prophetic office, when He spake of 'the other sheep which are not of this fold,' of 'the many mansions of His Father's house,' and of the 'legions of angels' which were ready for His immediate service and succour upon earth. We will look in succession at each one of these disclosures.

1. First, then, the fact that as perfect man Christ passed into the celestial region which surrounds our earth, conveys an impression of man's connexion with that region which could not otherwise have been received. The certainty that He is there, in His human as well as in His Divine nature, enables us to realize those mansions of our Father's house, just as we are helped in feeling the reality of scenes which we have never visited, when we learn that beings like ourselves are living in the midst of them. Moreover, this sense of man's community with that region is immensely deepened by those manifestations of His continued regard and sympathy which were witnessed by the Martyr and the Apostle. Our Lord has thus enabled men to feel, as they could not otherwise have felt, that heaven is not a sphere separated and apart from, but an enlargement of, this in which we are now dwelling.⁷ And therefore, whenever we think of it,

⁷ In the course of the book (*Divine Kingdom on Earth, As it is in Heaven*) which has been frequently referred to in these pages, reasons

when we look upwards, gazing as if our thoughts might pierce through the cloud behind which He was removed, and then reflect on the vastly-extended spaces which spread on every side around us, and on the crowded habitations that are in the midst of them—we feel that it is not an unknown and alien, or even a mysterious, region upon which we are looking, but one to which our world is in close relationship, in which we have an interest and heritage, which now forms part of the sphere of our existence, and which may, therefore, without any apprehension, be explored hereafter and traversed by ourselves.

2. Because Christ has gone there in the perfectness of His humanity, we are thus acquainted with the region which the cloud through which He passed conceals. And then with respect to the nature of its materialism, the properties of what we may call the framework of the life which is contained in it, very significant intimations are furnished by that glorious body which was worn by the

have been given for the belief that the scenes and objects, and many of the laws, that constitute and control the Economy in which the human system is enclosed, 'are not different and apart from those with which we are familiar, but are in strict correlation and continuity therewith. So that the now demonstrated oneness of the material creation, as far as science has explored it, represents a similar oneness in the individual and social life whereof it is the platform and arena. That is the same everywhere, though it is in many scenes developed into infinitely higher and more various modes than any with which we have been made acquainted.'—See especially chaps. i. and iv., and Appendix, Note A.

Redeemer after His resurrection. In that likeness the denizens of the celestial state are now living, and, in the same likeness all will hereafter live who enter there. Now, every reason which requires an adaptation between man's physical circumstances and his bodily and intellectual constitution, so that the one shall be in harmonious relation with the other, will equally require the same adaptation hereafter and elsewhere. The properties of the earth's materialism and the forces which control our movements on its surface, are implied in the human frame, and may be inferred from it. And may we not, on the same principle, conceive what the nature of those worlds must be, in which one whose 'countenance shines as the sun,' whose 'raiment is as light,' and who, moreover, is not hindered in his movements by any material obstacles, would be in his own place, or, as we might say, at home, amidst the externalism that surrounds him. Surely, in Christ's exalted form—when we bear in mind that these 'vile bodies' are to be 'changed into the likeness of His glorious body'—we have an infallible token of the physical properties of the world into which the heirs of redemption will be carried. It must be homogeneous throughout with the nature of those who shall be conveyed into it.⁸ Every attribute

⁸ On the supposition that there will be a constant advance of the spiritual beings in subordination to whose welfare the material universe exists, its character also must be so heightened that even the celestial

of the bodily framework wherewith they will be invested, must be found in their abode. Their own gloriousness must be reflected in the glorious scenes with which they will be everywhere surrounded.

3. Moreover, in the same disclosures we see what His own words had prepared the Apostles for seeing, that the scene from amidst which He spake to them, and in which they discerned His presence, is full of life and of activity. This fact, which might naturally be gathered from the information which is given in the Gospels and in the Acts of the Apostles, is marvellously pictured in the far-reaching movements, in the deeds and enterprises which we read of in the Book of Revelation. Because an abode of peace, it is not therefore one of inaction; because a state of rest, it is not therefore of luxurious apathy, of indolence as well as of repose. Instructed by those manifestations which the Apostles looked upon, we are protected against that mistaken, it might even be called imbecile, notion of the celestial state which implies that the loftier powers of the immortal nature are there constantly inert, that its noblest faculties are

world itself may be surpassed in gloriousness as much as it transcends the most glorious condition of our earth. In this connexion we may recall the Apostles' words, 'We according to His promise look for new heavens and a new earth.'—2 Pet. iii. 13; cp. Rev. xxi. 1, 5. Concerning this subject of the relation between the spiritual and physical, see a remarkable work, entitled *Man and his Dwelling-place*, by James Hinton, Lond. 1859.

undeveloped and unemployed. And instead of looking to Heaven as a paradise of indolent delight whose inhabitants are slumbering through ages without enterprise or occupation, we must regard it as a scene of devout activity, in which every faculty, strengthened with immortal vigour, will be employed.⁹ Men may thus derive strength and stimulus from the prospects of their life hereafter. With such expectations of the heavenly abode, our thoughts do not roam, guided by earth-taught fancies, through scenes of inert and listless joy: we dream not of wandering, like idle devotees, through the groves and palaces of Heaven. But remembering Christ's assurance, 'Where I am, there ye shall be also,' and recalling the glimpses which He has given of the abode into which He passed, we think of hereafter 'serving God day and night,' and that, no longer embarrassed by the defects and frailties of our earthly

⁹ 'There is no life, nor animation, nor play of affection, nor energy of action, in that shadowy paradise which hath possessed the imagination of the religious. . . . They shun activity, and shut up all in rest and contemplation. They wrap up all ages, yea, all eternity, in the meditation of one single thought, the thought of our redemption. Whereupon I ask them, what meaneth the emblem of a city which, all the world over, denotes activity, and society, and social engagements? . . . To God and Christ, surely, the whole time and soul and occupations of the people of heaven will be devoted. But how? Not in one act of harping, or singing of praise, not in one act of contemplating and resting, but in the active promotion of every good faculty which inhereth unto the renewed soul of man, in the propagation of happiness far and near, in the pursuit of knowledge and of every enjoyment.'—Edward Irving's *Orations*.

nature, we shall exert in that service the very faculties which are used in the pursuits and enterprises with which here and now we are engaged.

4. We see likewise that all that activity is implicated with our life and movements upon earth. Events which are here transpiring in the midst of and around us, enter into that vast system, and are working along with it for the welfare of those who are holding their places in the Order which is centred round the Throne. That great wide-reaching vision upon which the Apostle, like the Seers before him, was privileged to look, was not beheld as if it had opened out in a gorgeous spectacle far away from, and above, him; but he saw it in closest connexion, involved and blended, with the circumstances amidst which he was then living. From the Throne mandates issued by the Son of Man, and messengers bearing them, were continually carrying forward and discharging a 'vocation and ministry' which was concerned with the advancement of the Divine Kingdom upon earth. The four 'living creatures' whom he saw, were described by Ezekiel as 'going straight onward, running and returning,' upon commissions which were carried on amidst the nations and families of the men who were then living. He also tells us that the 'high and dreadful wheels' in which 'the spirit of the living creatures was,' and which symbolized the loftiest intelligence, as well as power that is irre-

sistible—for it is said they were ‘full of eyes within and without’—took their circuits amidst the very movements in which the seer and his fellow-exiles, as afterwards the apostle and his companions, were concerned. And it was from the midst of that ineffable glory, in words spoken by Him who is seated on the Throne, that the prophets received their commissions, that the messages were delivered to the seven churches, and that the mandates were conveyed to the ‘strong angels’ who are exercising their ministries of guardianship, or of retribution upon earth.¹

5. Then, finally, all through these eventful movements, this devout activity and the surrounding strife and turmoil upon which it is exerted—the presence of The Son of Man, overseeing and over-ruling all, may be discerned. The very title of the Book which chiefly furnishes these disclosures, reminds us that our attention should be carefully fixed upon this circumstance, for it is not called the

¹ Besides many obvious inferences on this subject that may be drawn from what has been already said about the ministry of angels, it may be added that, ‘In the Vedas and Puranas,’ the sacred books and the legendary histories of the Hindoos, we find ‘numerous testimonies to a widespread faith through the eastern world in those living relations between heaven and earth, which are spoken of above. We have in these tokens of a free intercourse, of a beaten and well-trodden way, between earth and heaven, what we may venture to call the heathen counterpart to the heavenly ladder which was seen by Jacob in his dream, on which angels were ascending and descending, with the Lord Himself at the summit.’—Archbishop Trench’s *Hulsean Lectures*.

Revelation of man's state and history, but 'The Revelation of Jesus Christ—which God sent and made known by signs unto His servant John.' From the beginning, when the Apostle turned to see the Voice which spake to him, on to the most distant prospect which this wondrous unveiling has disclosed; through every stage and movement, and at every crisis of man's history, we see the Redeemer present—The Same, to-day and for ever, which He was yesterday, ordering all things for the glory of God and the welfare of His Church.² We see Him in these later manifestations, just as we see Him, under the Ancient Dispensation, making the wrath of men and devils subserve His purposes, and putting down all enemies beneath His feet.

² This fact of our Lord's supremacy is not only indicated in His session on the Throne, and His leadership, on the white horses, (Rev. vi. 2; xix. 11) of the processions which are ever going forth, 'conquering and to conquer;' but also in the 'sealing of the 144 thousand,' and in the uprising of 'the city which lieth four square, with its twelve foundations and its twelve gates (Rev. vii. and xxi.).' Plainly does this symbol represent the fact that His saving purpose, in its several parts and its entirety, will be perfectly realized, although innumerable spirits shall fall away from Him in hopeless separation. Every place in the redeemed assembly, and every region of the heavenly Jerusalem; will be occupied, notwithstanding the resistance of individual wills and of communities (Rev. xvi. 19; xxi. 24, 26.) Enough has been, and will be, done for all men; and, if their part be left undone, they must fall away and make room for others—themselves abiding, hopelessly, as it would seem, beyond the limits of the *κόσμος*, in the 'outer darkness' which will for ever gather round it.

The vision, with this fivefold significance, which we have thus cursorily surveyed, was constantly before the minds of the apostles, and of men kindred in spirit with them. And it well accounts for their fervent zeal, and high unworldliness, and for the calm and piercing wisdom by which they were distinguished. It explains the marvellous dignity and steadfastness, the blended tolerance and firmness, the calmness along with the mighty energy, by which men who had betrayed so many infirmities before, were distinguished to the very end of their career. They were so much more patient and devoted and steadfast than any of their fellows, because Christ had opened the Kingdom of Heaven in their view, and because The Holy Spirit, strengthening and quickening their faculties, had brought them more and more under those powers of the world unseen to which they willingly submitted. Here is the reason why they pursued that course in which men saw a reflection of their Lord, and ‘took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus.’ Like the delegates of a great empire in an inconsiderable and remote community, they were raised above the men and the affairs amidst which they were nevertheless zealously and steadfastly engaged.³

³ The passage, made up of the closing paragraphs of the Gospels and the beginning of the Acts, which introduces the second period in the Apostles’ history, completely explains a difficulty which must forcibly strike every considerate person on first reading the New Testament. This is the difference, almost contrast, between the

The greatness of the objects which surrounded them was reflected in their demeanour : there was a complete accordance between the men and the vision in the midst of which they lived. And we therefore recognize in them the typical example of that genuine faith by which the world is overcome. Unlike the dreamy raptures of the mere enthusiast, or the alternate spasms and slothfulness of the fanatic, this principle, as seen in the Apostles, was ever calm and strong, as in the spirits of those ancient sons of God amongst whom they perceived themselves to be enrolled, and who are in like manner 'ever doing His commandments, while they hearken to the voice of His word.'

Thus, according to their several measures and capacities, we see in them, as in their Lord, the true system of human being reflected and embodied. Like Him they show us man's true path through the universe, the means by which he may demean himself, after the heavenly pattern, amidst earthly conditions of existence, and walk worthily as a son of God, and a citizen of His Immortal Kingdom.

men as we read of them first in the Gospels, and then in the Acts and the Epistles. In that passage the difference is accounted for. And in doing this, it brings out one of the most remarkable of those 'congruities of truth,' which we have before noticed (p. 202), as furnishing evidences of the authenticity of the Gospel History.

THE APOSTOLIC MINISTRY.

IN the 'Acts' of the Apostles, and in their Epistles, we learn how they confronted the world in the strength of this conviction, and carried on their conflict with the rulers of its darkness. From the Gospels we can ascertain the habits of thought and life by which they had reached their position and maintained it. They had heeded their Lord's instructions, and they had trusted Him, keeping themselves, at the same time, free from every 'lust of the flesh and of the spirit.' And thus they knew Him better, and witnessed fuller manifestations of His glory, every day they lived with Him. Until, at length, after the 'infallible proofs' which followed His resurrection, and the Pentecostal outpouring of The Spirit, the last seal was placed on their convictions.

Then, as we have seen, the realities of the Gospel Revelation opened around their minds, as clearly as any of the objects of which their senses informed them, or of which their reason could take cognizance. Those scenes

and movements which were symbolically pictured to the eye of the beloved seer, were constantly present to their apprehension. Outspread in a sphere continually widening, and centred round the Throne of God and of the Lamb, they saw the glorious harmonies of the Divine Kingdom, and our earth taken up, by reconciling love, into the midst of them. From its innermost circles, where the ancients of heaven and the ever-burning spirits keep their august estate nearest to the Throne, they saw the celestial armies, led on by Him Who is Faithful and True, going forth into the region where Chaos dwells and rules, harmonizing its tumultuous discords, pouring light on its disorder, in righteousness 'judging and making war' upon its falsehoods and corruptions. With absolute certainty, in visions real as any perceptible to sense—they thus beheld the Kingdom of God amidst and over and about them. They knew that the wisdom and might which they had seen embodied in their Lord, was overruling all the powers of evil even when they seemed mightiest and most irresistible. Not abstractions about these facts, or experiences growing out of them—the very realities themselves possessed those holy men, and imparted that marvellous dignity and steadfastness by which, unworthy as they had been before, they were henceforth distinguished to the end.

Thus, in the fullest meaning of the word 'belief,' as it includes both assent and trust, the Apostles 'believed'

in Christ and in the truths which He had revealed to them. And when we compare them with the men of their day and generation, and consider the work which they accomplished, we not only see them exemplifying the typical relation between 'faith' and 'unbelief,' but we also perceive the duties which are incumbent on those who are now sincerely maintaining their convictions: we get the very lessons by which we may be guided most effectively in the great controversy of our own day and generation.

1. And, first, in the chief name that distinguished them, in the designation 'witnesses' which they received from their Lord, and which they so naturally accepted—we are very significantly reminded that their testimony was concerned with facts, and not with mere opinions and abstractions.

Believing in their Divine Master, as we have seen, those regions which their faith opened out before them, and in which they beheld this earthly sphere taken up by Him, and harmoniously incorporated—became as substantial, as living and as life-giving, in their view, as anything they had to do with in any other part of their existence. It has often been observed, that it was this objective reality of the things to which they persisted in testifying, through loss and suffering, and even death—which constitutes that distinguishing

peculiarity of the Apostles' zeal whereby it is wholly exempted from any comparison with like persistence on the part of those who have witnessed only to opinions. Here, however, we are not referring to their constancy as an evidence, but as an example. And it is an example which Christian men can imitate. Realizing Christ's Personal nearness through devout and steadfast meditation, and using as they did the ordinances and symbols of our faith—He himself and the facts around Him will be surely manifested in their own glorious reality. Like the apostles, we also shall then dwell among those distant things, and look upon those things invisible, wherewith they were habitually conversant. And then we shall necessarily speak with a quickening power of truths which we thus know, and testify with an overcoming might of that we have thus seen. Now, realities deposed to in this manner, must be taken account of in men's consciousness and in their theories. They cannot be ceremoniously postponed, or placed amongst those lifeless notions that are destined to be extinguished by the onward progress of discovery. It is thus as facts which philosophers and common men must equally acknowledge, which must have a place in the inductions of the one, and in the habitual recognition of the other—that the subjects of our testimony should be brought forward by Christian men now, as they were by the Apostles. The common neglect of this

feature of their ministry, our dwelling so much on the doctrines, rather than on the occurrences and objects, of the Gospel, the representation of it as a plan and scheme, rather than as a living revelation—explains, we might almost say excuses, much of that vague language in which unbelief is speaking at this time of the ‘religious instincts’ of man, and his ‘devout sentiments,’ as if ‘instincts’ and ‘sentiments’ could account for the historical realities of the Church’s creeds. Here we find the main reason why the matters of Christian faith are spoken of as ‘open questions’ about which no one can reach any definite conclusion, when, surely, the truth is that they are just as capable of being determined definitely as are any of the realities, beyond the reach of mere sense, on which our convictions have been fastened.

2. We get this lesson respecting the manner of our testimony from observing the character of that which the Apostles delivered in their day and generation. And another, which is of great importance, is suggested by the fact that they brought forward the truths of which they were thus conscious, in the closest relation to the wants and aspirations of the men to whom they ministered. They ‘declared Him’ whom those men were ‘ignorantly worshipping,’ and whom they had been ‘seeking after if haply they might find Him,’ the Apostles made known

to them. In this sense they were 'all things to all men,' so that they might 'by all means save some.' We shall see this distinction of their testimony brought out very strikingly, if we compare together St. Paul's words to the heathen at Lystra, and those which he spake to the Jews at Antioch and to the philosophers at Athens. In each case he uttered forth his message so as to present that phase of Christ's teaching, that aspect of His character, which was most suitable to the habits of mind, and the special needs, of those who were addressed by him. The same principle was evidently observed by Philip when he was preaching to the Eunuch, and by St. Stephen and St. Peter when they showed the Jews how Christ fulfilled their desires and expectations.

Now it is a great lesson, and one which we may observe very usefully, which is learnt from this part of their example. For every one who has looked largely and comprehensively and far around, into the heights and depths which His Revelation opens, will feel with the apostles, and will be eager, as they were, to say—That Christ's Life and Teaching, have not only, as we have seen all along in the preceding pages, a message to men in all conditions of feeling and all estates of life, but also in every stage of intellectual attainment. His Gospel supplies what is defective, and illuminates what is obscure, in their largest speculations. This has been recently shown in relation to that system of philosophy which

is at this time presented, as the 'final result of a profound analysis of society and man, and which has to many minds such singular attractiveness.' Justly has it been said, and very clearly has it been also shown, 'that Christianity assures what Positivism promises; that it includes in a fact what Positivism symbolizes in a conception, and carries on, to the unseen and eternal, ideas which that system limits to the seen and temporal. Nor,' as has been further observed, 'will Comte's philosophy have any lasting power except as a transitional preparation for a fuller faith, and thus he himself will be one more in the long line of witnesses which show that the soul is "naturally Christian."'¹

And then besides meeting by this method men's intellectual needs and aspirations, the Christian message also declares how their cravings for a purer social condition may be satisfied. In the heavenly Jerusalem, 'the holy city which is coming down from God out of Heaven,' that will be established upon earth—we may show them halls of cordial fellowship and palaces of stainless justice, as well as temples of high and rapturous devotion. There they may plainly see how the yearnings of the oppressed and needy for better days will be amply satisfied. Let us then, with the Apostles' spirit, carry these messages amongst our crowded populations in their restlessness and wretchedness. Let

¹ Professor Westcott, *On Positivism in relation to Christianity*.

them understand that the Gospel was the only effective help in their calamities, and that Christ is their only real Deliverer and Friend.

In the ears of every man and woman in our land, let this proclamation be announced. And in the same spirit and method let us then carry it across the seas. Let us thus tell the Brahmin of the great Incarnation, and of the Perfect Sacrifice. And let the Buddhist learn how his being may be truly absorbed, while yet it is not lost, but rather developed more perfectly, in a nature higher than his own. Let the Mahometan, with his great thought of The One God, and of His Sovereign Will, hear of the Divine Confederation in which that Will has been perfectly embodied, and of the heavenly Prophet through whom the changeless and Almighty Ruler is authentically known. Let him see his crescent light waxing into the full-orbed truth, of which the larger, nobler segment has been in his view hitherto eclipsed. Yea, let all on whom that Great Luminary, the Sun of Truth and Righteousness, has not fully shone, though of its brightness they have had dim glimmerings—be led forth into the open day, where they may fully see Him Whom only in parts and glimpses they have seen imperfectly before.

3. For, let it be again said, Christ's Gospel meets them with the very message which they need, explaining their

perplexities, fulfilling and realizing their noblest expectations. And knowing that it stands in this deep harmony with things in men and around them, our zeal in delivering it should not be discouraged through difficulties caused by facts that are apparently opposed to it.

In this particular we may be guided by the third lesson which we get from the Apostles' example, and which is very clearly suggested when we consider some of the hindrances that attended the delivery of their testimony in Jerusalem, and especially those which St. Paul encountered when he declared it in Athens, and in Rome. They were not, they could not be, unconscious of the apparent incongruity between its disclosures and many other realities which sense and reason unquestionably verified. 'How can these things be?' was a question often put to them by careful readers of the ancient Scriptures, who had thence gathered, and with apparently so much reason, such a different conception of the Messiah from that which Christ embodied. They could all understand, and could even sympathize with, that 'offence' which the Cross thus presented to the Jews, as St. Paul, with his high culture, must have felt still more deeply what an aspect of 'foolishness' it presented to the Greeks. He knew well what the Stoics and Epicureans were thinking as he spoke to them. He knew also how that which he would acknowledge to have been the noble pride of the Romans

was outraged by his utterances. Still, neither in Rome nor in Athens did he suppress any portion of his testimony, or feel ashamed of it. But, like the other Apostles he boldly said, 'These facts are as we declare them. We must leave you to reconcile them with your religion and philosophy; and most perfectly can they be reconciled therewith. But, at all events, as realities they must be received by you.'

Now Christ's followers may well remember this, and get strength from the remembrance, whenever they are tempted to suppress truth, or conceal what they feel is its offensiveness in the regards of many to whom their testimony is delivered. Their own experience may have given them a sympathy with men's dislike to the statements they are putting forth. They may understand, nay, they may themselves have felt, their hearers' fastidious distaste to phrases upon which discredit has been cast by the fanatical and narrow-minded. Still they must not shrink, any more than the Apostles did when they saw those half-pitying, half-malicious, sneers on the countenances of those whom they addressed. But just as they did, Christ's messengers now must say—'Indeed, brother men,² the realities of the supernatural world, and the relations in which we stand to it, were embodied perfectly in Christ, and they are what He affirmed. - Herein we are speaking that which we do

² ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί was the apostolic phrase.

know, and testifying that which we have seen. For the present we postpone, and at all times we would speak diffidently of, their bearing upon other truths, and of the dogmatic shapes into which they should be cast. The statements of them may be again changed, as they have been before, in relation to new developments of thought, and to fresh errors and denials. But we cannot speak otherwise than confidently of the facts themselves whereof the Church is ever testifying, and which are embodied in her Creeds. For these we claim a place in the inductions of your philosophy, and a recognition in your consciousness. And we tell you that if you neglect them, or pass over them, you are disregarding realities which must be taken account of, if you will see the real constitution of things by which you are surrounded, and wisely fill out your place and your obligations in the midst of them !'

4. But, along with this firmness in delivering their testimony, Christ's followers must also show, as the Apostles did, a considerate sympathy with those to whom it is uttered, especially by making the experience they have themselves passed through in reaching their convictions helpful in their brother's case. This is our fourth lesson from the example of those holy men ; and it well deserves our best and most constant heedfulness. The Apostles constantly urged on their readers and hearers, the necessity

of that considerate attentiveness which had been so profitable to themselves. Often expressly, and always by implication, they reminded men that we must ‘incline our ears to wisdom, and apply our heart to understanding: we must seek for her as silver, and search for her as hidden treasure, if we would understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.’ They said in effect what Christian men must now say to all whom, with the same purpose, they are addressing, ‘Brother men;—The things which we see, are indeed there, before us and around us, and we see them as certainly as anything which we behold. And you may see them too if you will wait, and look patiently and steadfastly as we have done. But in no other way can they be seen by you, just as you cannot otherwise behold any of the objects which do not force themselves by sensible testimony on your regards.’

The Apostles said, too, and Christ’s followers now must also say, ‘And you must be trustful, as well as patient, if this Divine knowledge is to be gained by you. As Christ Himself “could do no mighty works among those who would not believe in Him,” neither can we help you in this, or indeed in any other matter, if you will not give us a reasonable confidence; if you will only listen with doubt and suspicion, and fasten your thoughts only on grounds for cavilling and for mistrust. Reasonably we ask you to give a lowly though not

an abject, a confiding but not credulous, attention to those who have true claims on it. And, instead of regarding your exercises of private judgment as a right which should be arrogantly claimed, look on them rather as a duty, and a duty which man cannot discharge by his own individual powers, without reference to his connexion with his fellows, or to the help which God has ordained he should receive from them. Upon these principles, listen reverently, with a wise humility and a noble self-mistrust, to the consentient voices of the Church as they have been uttered by good men in every generation. And thus guided you will see—that which, while you stand apart in mistrustful self-sufficiency, you cannot see—all the claims which Christ has on your loyal and affectionate obedience. You will hear the testimony which He has given to the Scriptures and ordinances of the ancient dispensation, and recognize the light which He has cast on the ever-increasing purpose of the ages before Him, on the widely-opening regions and multiplied objects that were around Him, and on the thought of man and his experience through the centuries which have followed His coming into the midst of us.

‘Moreover, we must remind you that purity is also an essential condition of obtaining that vision of God’s Kingdom which is vouchsafed to genuine belief. “Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, or who shall

stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. . . . This is the generation of them that seek Him; that seek Thy face, O God of Jacob.” Free not only from coarse sensual indulgence, but also from fastidious care about the refinements of life, and eager craving for its high places—such men “hear the words of God, and see the visions of the Almighty,” not only in occasional ecstasies, but in calm, habitual perception. No wonder that those who are destitute of these qualifications are still in doubt! No wonder if to them, the revelations of Christ’s Gospel are mystical, and the utterances of His servants like those of men who “speak in parables.” We might as well marvel that men cannot see what the astronomer has told them of, when the lenses of their instrument are clouded and their hands are shaking as they lift it to the skies—as wonder that God’s truth is darkened in their view. Only pure, calm, and steadfast spirits can behold the glories of His kingdom. Only those who are “willingly doing His will” in pure unworldly lives, can “know Christ’s teaching,” and know that it is of God.’

5. But there is another important lesson which the Apostles’ example furnishes. We perceive it in the fact that they urged on their hearers the subjects and

objects, before troubling them with the mere instruments, of Christian Faith. Most plainly those holy men acted on the principle that true reverence can only be rendered to the Church, its Scriptures and its ordinances, in the light of that knowledge which is conveyed by them ; and that, first of all, and in order to get this knowledge, we must use these agencies in a lower than their true character, and simply as witnesses for which attention may be claimed. Then afterwards, after we have gone by their means into the presence of Jesus Christ, and realized our place in the supernatural world of which He is the Head, we shall clearly see the glories of our Divine Fellowship, and understand the preciousness of the Volume which it puts into our hands.

Surely the experience of every Christian man will enable him to understand and enter into the importance of this principle. Nevertheless, obvious as its truth and its importance is, it has certainly not been kept in view by many of our teachers ; and, in this fact, we perceive one of the main causes of the prevailing unbelief. The inconsiderate, we might almost say the idolatrous, language which is used by many Christian men about the Church and the Bible, has the effect of obscuring Christ Himself as well as His words and works, and hiding from our brethren's view the glories of His Kingdom. Instead of putting forward these

instruments, first of all, in their simply instrumental character, many demand, at the very outset, that homage for them which cannot be duly rendered till most of their purposes are served, till they have, in fact, placed man above themselves, and brought him into living intercourse with those supernatural realities about which they were given to furnish information. Thence, and only thence, from what we may call a position of approximate belief, can he understand and appreciate these Revelation Organs, just as he can only fully understand, and with perfect effectiveness employ, the instruments of scientific research when he has already fruitfully used them in actual investigation.² What they have already made known enables him to understand their capabilities more clearly, as well as their defects and incapacities, and so guides him in employing them more usefully. It is thus also, as the example of the Apostles shows, in respect of the instruments of Revelation. This principle was long ago affirmed by St. Augustine, in his memorable precept, ‘*Crede ut intelligas. Intellectus enim merces est fidei!*’ When men have got a firm position among supernatural realities, then and not before, not before they have actually stood in the full light of the heavenly disclosures, will they see how justly we call the Scriptures, of the Old and New Testament, the

² *Reasons of Faith*, chaps. ix. xi.

Holy Bible, the very Utterance of God; and how truly also we say of the Church that it is His dwelling-place on earth, and that for us it is none other than the Gate of Heaven.

These five lessons which are commended by their wisdom, as well as by their authority, will greatly help sincere Christian men in doing the work which is needed in the great controversy of our day and generation. Does not the neglect of them account for the darkening of the supernatural world, and of our relations therewith, which, as Christ expressly declared would be the case, is accompanied by 'distress of nations and perplexity, by the failing of men's hearts for fear, and for looking after those things which are yet coming on the earth?' What words could describe more exactly the troubled anxious condition of men in all classes at this time? And most plainly it has arisen because The Sun of Righteousness is darkened in the heavens, and the Moon, the Church which shines by reflecting her Lord's glory, does not give out her light; because the stars, her guides and teachers, are seen 'falling from their places;' because, in one word, the 'powers of heaven' have been shaken. Here is the cause, the main cause, of men's 'distress' and of their 'perplexity.' Nor will this disquietude be removed until Christian men recognize more clearly the

greatness of their position in Christ Jesus, and make it known more wisely as well as more zealously to the indifferent and scornful and mistrusting.

For this end let all seek for more of those qualifications which the Apostles had, by walking more as they did, thoughtfully, confidingly, and obediently with Christ. Then He will more and more manifest forth His glory in our view: the 'light of His countenance' will shine upon His servants. And reflected from them in fuller, richer brightness, through the spheres of their several vocations and ministries, 'His way will be made known throughout the earth, and His saving health amongst all nations. God, yea, even our own God, will bless us, and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him.'

NOTE.

MORE than once statements have been made in the preceding pages which the Writer feels may subject him to serious misconceptions as to his views of the union of the Two Natures in the Person of our Blessed Lord. On this account, he will here ask for attention to a few words upon the subject.

Let him say, then, that *ex animo*, and without any reserve, he accepts the declarations of the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds, as well as those of our second Article, which treat of this great verity. And he believes that he is as clear of the Nestorianism with which he will probably be charged, as he has certainly striven to divest his statements of any resemblance to the Eutychianism which ‘confounds the substance,’ and the Apollinarianism which denies Christ’s possession of a ‘reasonable soul.’ He distinctly holds that ‘The Son Which is the Word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the Very and Eternal God, and of one substance with the Father, took man’s nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin of her substance: so that two whole and perfect Natures, that is to say, the Godhead and Manhood were joined together in one Person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very Man.’ But the line of thought which he has been pursuing, compelled him to face the question, When was Christ’s ‘reasonable soul’ first distinctly conscious of the indwelling with it of the Eternal Word? Now this question cannot be vaguely put aside by the objection that it trenches on a mystery with which we have no concern. Very little consideration is needed to show that it is of the greatest and most practical importance, since the power of Christ’s human life—we do not say as an example, but—as a typical embodiment of the Divine will, depends upon the answer it may receive. The writer has deliberately reached the conclusion that, while suggestions and impressions that He was in union with God, may have often, at earlier periods, come into Christ’s human mind—as was indeed betokened by the answer which He gave to His mother’s reproaching question in the Temple—yet He was not

distinctly conscious of the fact until The Voice came to Him from heaven in His baptism. Then He knew that, in His one Person, He was Son of Man and Son of God. And from that time He claimed, and, in His miracles, He exercised, Divine prerogatives.

This view satisfies the language of the Creeds, from which, when they are regarded as fruits of the insight of wise and holy men into the laws of the Divine Government, and the meaning of Holy Scripture, there can be no appeal. At the same time it secures all the power which flows from the devout contemplation of Christ's human life. The Writer will feel no anxiety though his words may not harmonize with those which we now often hear, and even from theologians of high repute, upon this subject. Much of this language, though it is current and stamped with high authority, is, he believes, such as Eutyches and Apollinaris themselves might have employed. But if he should be made acquainted with sufficient reasons for doubting whether his view is in accordance with those of the Catholic Teachers of the Church, he will reconsider it, and, wherever need is shown, he will alter the language in which it is expressed.

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CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION.

Importance of realizing the Supernatural Connexions of Man’s Existence—How this Realization is effected, and its Results—Erroneous Methods of using the Organs of Revelation for this end—Evil Consequences thence arising—These indicate Objects of men who are taking True Methods—And show the Course which should be adopted by them—Effects flowing from the Efforts thus carried forward—Outline of Plan of the Work which is suggested by these Views.

CHAPTER I.

THE DIVINE ORDER.

Nature of the Divine Order, and its Final Purpose in our View—Called into Existence by the Second Person of the Godhead—Quickening Operations of the Holy Spirit—Typal Form of Created Spiritual Existences—Divine Communications with them—Nature of the Associations which they constitute—Circumstances of their Progress—Helps vouchsafed in it, and its Issues—Failures: Apostasy from the Divine Order—Consequent Conflict of Loyal with Rebellious Spirits—Relations between Various Communities—Apprehension of the Scheme thus carried into Effect—Introduction of Man into the midst of it—Circumstances of his Unfallen State—His Life amidst them, and his Prospects—Forfeiture of these Prospects.

CHAPTER II.

HUMAN APOSTASY : ITS CAUSES AND RESULTS.

Reciprocal Influence and Connexion of Spiritual Existences illustrated—Advantages arising from the Connexion—Its Perversion, and the Consequences—Of Evil Spirits, and their increase of such Perversion—Explanation from this Source of Man's Fall and Loss—Details of Course in which it was effected—Its Consequences shown (1.) In Discord between Man and the Order he was placed in—(2.) In Morbid Reflection of the Mind upon itself—(3.) In Loss of Communion with the Eternal Word—(4.) In Human Discord and Contention—General View of these Evils, and their transmission to Posterity—View of them as Necessary Results from Laws that are Unchangeable—Light in which regarded by Man's Fellow Inheritors of Being—Probability of Occurrence of Similar Events among other Races—Reasons for expecting an Intervention on Man's Behalf—General Account of the Intervention actually effected—Its Main Features, as shown (1.) In Mediator's Nearer Relation with Man—(2.) In His Establishment of a Society additional to those originally Constituted—General Review of the Work thus carried forward.

CHAPTER III.

THE RESTORING DISPENSATION : ITS INSTITUTIONS, AND THEIR WORKING.

View of this Dispensation conducts into 'religious' Sphere of Man's Existence—Must be measured by reference to Normal Condition of Being—Nearer Relation of Mediator operates (1.) In Drawing out introverted Feelings—(2.) In correcting False Views of God—(3.) In re-establishing sense of Law—(4.) In counteracting Divisive Influences of Evil—Recapitulation : General Review of this part of Redeeming Work—Further carried forward by Institution of the Church. Its General Purpose and Design—This carried out (1.) By its Consecration of Times and Places—(2.) By its Institution of Sacrificial Service—(3.) Through the Agency of Representative Priesthood—(4.) By its Aggressive Conflict with the 'World'—(5.) By its Associations for Worship and Service—(6.) Also through Use of its Ordinances as 'Means of Grace'—General Review of Working and Influence of these Institutions—These Purposes carried forward in midst of each Generation on Earth—Also carried forward amidst Departed Generations—Intermediate State (Hades), and its Inhabitants—Of the Knowledge which is conveyed therein—Relation of this State to Man's Condition upon Earth—Consideration of it is necessary to the Completeness of our View of the Church—Views hence suggested as to Communion of its Members—Recapitulation : General View of Church Society—Its complete Adaptation to its Purposes—Fulfilment of Restoring Work. Inferences from its General Aspect and Perfectness—Its Development in Man's History.

CHAPTER IV.

LAWS OF RESTORING DISPENSATION : THEIR DEVELOPMENT IN HISTORY.

Its Laws Developed by Comparison with it of Man's Proceedings—This Comparison in View of Prophets 'since the World Began'—FIRST RESULT of Comparison seen in Necessity of Trustful Reception of the Remedial Dispensations and

Cordial Use of its Provisions—This necessary for Individual Welfare—It is also necessary for accomplishment of Social Purposes—Completeness of the Revelation for both these Ends—SECOND RESULT of Comparison in showing the purely *instrumental* character of Remedial Institutions—This one of their Fundamental Characteristics—Man's Natural Tendency to overlook it—Effects of this Neglect shown (1.) In State of Heathen World—And (2.) In the Corruptions of the Church—These appear (*a*), In Intolerance; (*β*), In Obscured Views of Revealed Disclosures; (*γ*), In Idolatrous Worship—General View of these Effects—THIRD RESULT of Comparison in showing the Necessity of connecting the 'Supernatural' with the 'Common' Order of Existence—How these were meant to be Combined—Inspired Testimony on this Subject—This confirmed by Consequences of neglecting such Connexion—These Consequences further shown (1.) In Revolt against Spiritual Authority—And (2.) In its Despotic Exercise—Prophetic Protest against both these Evils—FOURTH RESULT of Comparison in bringing out Law of Functional Service—Nature of this Law, and its Universality—It is specially incumbent on Man in his Church Position and Relations—Typal Instances of the Disregard of it in Jewish History—Consequences of neglecting it shown (1.) In Mutual Strife—(2.) In False Views of the Means and Instruments of Grace—(3.) In Neglect of Supernatural Ministrations in the Church—Prophetic Protests against this Neglect—Condemnation of it by Life and Ministry of Unfallen Beings—FIFTH RESULT of Comparison in production of Assurance and Hope—Grounds of such Confidence—History shows (1.) Advantages of holding—(2.) Evils of resigning it—General Review of above Five Laws of Redeeming Dispensation—Growing Neglect of them.

CHAPTER V.

FULFILMENT IN LIFE AND MINISTRY OF CHRIST.

General View of Causes of neglect of above Laws—This neglect reached its Crisis at Period of the Incarnation—Purposes of the Incarnation—Embodiment in Christ, and Manifestation by Him of Divine Order of Man's Being—Shown generally in His habitual Mindfulness of our Supernatural Relations—Then specially (1.) In His exemplary Fulfilment of Family Obligations—(2.) In heedfulness of Neighbourly Obligations—(3.) In Functional Discharge of Good Works prepared for Him—(4.) In Fulfilment of National Duties and Relationships—(5.) In observance of Duties and Services of Church Life—This Manifestation of True Order of Human Life made more impressive by 'Signs and Wonders' wrought by Him—Views of Human Conflict with 'Powers of Darkness' thus made known—This Conflict reached its Crisis in His Death—Perfectness of Atoning Sacrifice brought out in that Event—His Ministry in the Intermediate State—Disclosure, in His Resurrection, of Nature of Celestial Beatitude—Recapitulation: Review of His Manifestation of Divine Life—Apostles' Testimony respecting it—Their Declaration of the Laws of Redeeming Dispensation as made known by Him—Recapitulation: Review of their Testimony—Purpose of St. John's Apocalypse. Represents Powers of Evil assailing Divine Kingdom—These seen (1.) in Evils which arise Naturally upon Earth—And then (2.) in Special Chastisements sent Retributively by God—These Evils shown also in course of Diminution and Extinction—Recapitulation: Review of Apocalyptic Visions—Their Purposes in Man's Enlightenment.

CHAPTER VI.

LATER ELUCIDATION AND DEVELOPMENT.

Revelation now perfectly Completed—Causes of Misapprehension of it—Yet everywhere received by Godly Men; and more fully understood by them through Heresies and Unbelief—This illustrated in the cases (1.) of the Judaizers—And (2.) of the Gnostics in the 'Early Church'—Their Errors Reproductions of older Errors and seen again in later—Work of the Fathers with respect to them—Review of Patristic Teaching—Elucidating Work of the Fathers taken up by the Schoolmen—Afterwards by the Mystics and the Systematic Theologians—Services rendered to Godly Men by these Teachers—Their Instruction confirmed by Personal Experience and Historical Events—Extended by instrumentality of Holy Scripture—And by larger Knowledge of Men; also by Scientific Discovery—Recapitulation: Review of these Elucidating Agencies—Results in manifestation of Continuity and Correlation of Man's Existence—Review shows that every Man has been supplied with means of Progress—This also true of every Society—Recapitulation: Results of Elucidating Progress.

CHAPTER VII.

FUTURE PROGRESS AND FULFILMENT.

What thus seen true in Past describes Man's Position now—Institutions of Restoring Dispensation still in Force and Efficacy—Supposition that they were now anywhere accepted—In that place God's Will Embodied; Embodiment must spread—Provincial Communities thus Organized—These must be developed in improved National Life—Relations of Church and Nation in this state—Nations thus raised must be United—Their Mutual Helpfulness in their Union and Intercourse—Their Aggressive Movements on the Dark Places of Earth—Confirmation of such Prospects in 'Prophetical Predictions'—Significance of Restoring Dispensation acknowledged—Man's Earthly Condition approaching that of Intermediate State—This Approach will continue till Close of Earthly Economy—Circumstances of After Life—Possible Future Developments of Divine Order with references to Future Destinies of 'Lost'—Closing Meditations.

APPENDIX.

NOTE A.—On the Reasons, supplied by Revelation and interpreted by Science, for believing that there is a community of moral and material nature between ourselves and the inhabitants of other Worlds, and of the light which is hence thrown on Man's Future Life.

NOTE B.—On the Natural Use of Theological Terms and Phrases.

NOTE C.—On the Continuity of the Church.

NOTE D.—Of the True Place of Holy Scripture as part of Divine Revelation, and of the manner in which the Evidence of its Authority should be presented.

NOTE E.—Detailed Application of the Teaching of the Work in the Revival of Church Life; in the Congregation first, then in Ruri-Decanal and Diocesan Synods, and in Convocation—Of the Secular Influences of this Life, and the Method in which Missionary Labours should be carried forward.

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE		PAGE
HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY	1	WORKS OF MR. TENNYSON	20
VOYAGES AND TRAVEL	4	POETRY	21
SCIENCE	6	FICTION	24
ESSAYS AND LECTURES	11	CORNHILL LIBRARY OF FICTION	26
MILITARY WORKS	12	THEOLOGICAL	27
INDIA AND THE EAST	15	MISCELLANEOUS	34
BOOKS FOR THE YOUNG, &c.	16		

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